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ABSTRACT

Aid to teachers planning and implementing a child-centered prekindergarten program is offered in this comprehensive guide. After a brief introduction, sections of the guide (1) address the topics of separation and adjustment; (2) present sample room arrangements and suggest ideas for management routines, scheduling, planning, and ordering of materials; (3) explore the role of the educator in guiding children's growth and development through verbal and non-verbal interactions; (4) focus on the prekindergarten team, offering suggestions for promoting professional development as well as a guide to classroom assessment for administrators; (5) discuss the structure of a stimulating, supportive learning environment, highlighting early language experiences and including discussions of children with limited English proficiency, special needs, the multicultural/nonsexist classroom, and over a dozen individual interest areas; (6) discuss ways of increasing parent participation; (7) discuss the physical and nutritional needs of young children and their families, indicating the kinds of social and health services available to them, and discussing child abuse identification and intervention; (8) describe assessment techniques for teachers with particular attention to periodic staff review; (9) delineate the scope of the prekindergarten program and indicate developmental skills to be acquired by prekindergarten children; and (10) offer a bibliography of recommended books for children, parents, and teachers, plus a compilation of professional organizations and journals. The guide is profusely illustrated with line drawings and black and white photographs. A form that practitioners may use to evaluate the guide is appended. (RH)

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Three, Four, Open the Door

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FOREWORD

For many children, prekindergarten is their first formal group experience. Not surprisingly, research has shown that a quality preschool experience is a valuable indicator of a successful career in succeeding years of schooling. Children in the preschool environment need a rich, supportive learning environment where they can explore, discover, manipulate, talk freely, build, create, and grow intellectually, emotionally, and socially.

Three, Four, Open the Door has been developed to help teachers and other staff members create such a rich environment for prekindergarten experiences in school. To enrich and extend these experiences it is especially important that teachers and other staff members involve parents in developing and maintaining a home-school partnership, a primary ingredient in the formula for preschool success.

Three, Four, Open the Door also considers language development in the light of the diverse cultures from which our New York City children come. For many of them, English is not the language spoken at home. This guide offers practical suggestions for language development emphasizing listening and speaking, as well as cultural sharing. The guide also includes a section on health and social services.

Your reaction to the suggestions offered in this guide will most certainly play a part in planning workshops and revising materials for the prekindergarten experience in the months to come.

Charlotte Frank

Charlotte Frank
Executive Director
Division of Curriculum and Instruction

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INTRODUCTION

The Guide and Its Contents

Three, Four, Open the Door is a comprehensive guide to planning and implementing a successful, child-centered prekindergarten program.

Its pages contain lively, practical suggestions for enriching the classroom through personalized activities and materials. A wide variety of photographs and drawings serve to illustrate specific techniques, arrangements, procedures, and possibilities.

For new prekindergarten teachers, as well as for those experienced in early childhood education, this guide will give fresh clarity and focus to the philosophy of developmental education.

The Introduction provides a glimpse of the busy, curious, insatiable prekindergarten child, and evokes a one-minute "snapshot" of a classroom ideally suited to this child. Basic elements of the learning process are also included.

In Section 1, First Days, the sensitive concerns of separation and adjustment are addressed. Suggestions are offered for planning the first week's schedules, and for appropriate teacher-parent interactions. Suitable materials for this time period are listed.

In Section 2, Creating A Learning Environment, sample room arrangements are presented, and suggestions offered for management routines, scheduling and planning, and ordering of appropriate materials. A classroom checklist is included.

Section 3, The Interactive Teacher, explores the role of the educator in guiding children's growth and development through verbal and non-verbal interactions. It provides representative classroom dialogues, which reveal the teacher as listener and facilitator.

Section 4, Working Together, focuses on the important partnership formed by the members of the prekindergarten team. Their joint efforts provide services, strengths, and skills vital to the classroom experience. Recommendations are included for appropriate methods of promoting professional growth and development.

A detailed description of the prekindergarten program, its nature and its goals, is presented in a question-and-answer format in A Guide for Administrators. Supervisors will find it useful to visit the classroom, both with and without the presence of children, to assess the emphasis and direction of the learning experience.

The structure of an exciting, supportive learning environment is thoroughly discussed in Section 5, The Emerging Curriculum. Children's interest areas are described in detail, along with teaching tips, ideas for planning and preparation, suggested questions, and additional activities. Related vocabulary and skills are also included.

Early language experiences are highlighted in this section, and specific activities and techniques are recommended for working with Limited English Proficient children. In addition, there is a thorough discussion of ways to encourage and involve the child with special needs, as well as a thought-provoking analysis of the multicultural/nonsexist classroom.

Section 6, Parent Involvement, explores the vital home/school connection, and addresses possible needs and concerns of prekindergarten parents. Specific suggestions are provided for arranging school and home visits, volunteer activities, and ongoing workshops and conferences are included.

Section 7, Health and Social Services, deals with the physical needs of young children and their families, and discusses the kinds of assistance available to them. Initial health screening requirements are explained, and suggestions for informal observation and awareness.

A discussion of the crucial problem of child abuse contains warning signals for the prekindergarten teacher, and presents ideas for approaching the topic with sensitivity in the classroom.

Nutritional guidance is included in this section.

Section 8, Ongoing Assessment, reviews the many techniques of recordkeeping, formal and informal, which are useful to prekindergarten teachers. Examples are provided, and the periodic staff review is examined in detail.

The continuous developmental growth of the child is reflected in the suggestions for smooth articulation from home to prekindergarten, and from the prekindergarten to kindergarten. A developmental checklist is included.

The developmental skills to be acquired by the prekindergarten child, and the scope covered by the program, are delineated in Section 9, Scope of the Curriculum Areas.

Section 10, Bibliography and Resources, offers listings of recommended books for children, parents, and teachers, as well as a compilation of professional organizations and journals.

The Prekindergarten Child

Four-year-olds are active, noisy, energetic, boisterous, and exuberant. Fours are physical; they are in almost constant motion. They rarely walk, and continually invent new ways of moving across the room - hopping, skipping, leaping, dancing, and twirling. Fours play with passionate intensity. They are imaginative and creative. Play themes are fluid, sometimes changing from moment to moment, but still interconnected by four-year-old logic. These themes sometimes continue over a period of days. Emotions are strong and often expressed physically. Feelings change rapidly, and bitter enemies pounding at each other may five minutes later be best buddies, together fending off the rest of the world.

Four-year-olds are also funny. They love to tell jokes and be silly. Their humor is riotously contagious, and hard to contain. When things get out of hand, the best remedy may be the teacher's own sense of humor and creativity.

Autonomy and Attention-Getting

As three-year-olds reach the age of four, they experience a new surge of independence. Along with this come the inevitable conflicts as they swing back and forth, wanting one minute to do everything for themselves without adult interference, and then suddenly the next minute wanting help with a coat or to cuddle on a lap.

They question and challenge authority, asking, "But why do we have to...?" At the same time, they are quick to make up rules or "tell" when someone else breaks the rules. On one hand, they love to help and want to take on many responsibilities, but on the other, they may choose to assert themselves by refusing to clean up.

Fours still want lots of attention ("Teacher! Teacher! Look what I made!"). They love to talk with teachers - to describe what they are doing; to relate things that happen outside of school; and to ask endless questions.

For the most part, four-year-olds appear more interested in other children than in adults. They look for the attention and approval of other children. In a whole group situation, they may even compete with the teacher for their classmates' attention, often doing or saying something designed to get a laugh.

Interpersonal Behavior

Four-year-olds are becoming more cooperative in their play. They quickly pick up on each other's ideas. Leadership changes frequently, but they tend to be bossy. They plan, and plot, and defend each other. They try to manipulate each other with threats like, "If you don't...I won't invite you to my birthday party."

Fours want to have a "best friend." However, friendships change, and jealousy often arises. Threesomes can be difficult, and one child may become the scapegoat of the other two. Four-year-olds love to take over a space and keep everyone else out. They often put up barricades and and privacy signs, shouting, "You can't come in. This is OUR house!"

They are impressed by and want to imitate difficult physical skills. They love to climb high and to jump off things. Their storytelling often involves characters who overcome enormous difficulties and accomplish daring physical feats. Their fantasy play also reflects the desire to be all-powerful. "Good guys" and "bad guys" are often pitted against each other, as they play at being superheroes, kings, and queens, able to do the impossible.

Fours frequently seem to be pushing themselves to be bigger, stronger, and more powerful than anyone else. They love to compete, but they hate to lose. They boast and brag and sometimes make fun of younger or less skilled children.

Thinking and Doing

Four-year-old thinking is still concrete. Fours need lots of direct, hands-on experiences in the drive to understand the world around them. They need to touch and manipulate and to experiment on their own before they can develop more abstract concepts. They often need to talk aloud to themselves to help form ideas as they work.

Four-year-olds love challenging problems to solve. They are beginning to be able to work in groups toward mutual solutions. They can plan and think things through before undertaking projects. However, they often tend toward the grandiose, and need the teacher's help in working toward realistic goals.

Fours are beginning to take an interest in their own thought processes. They constantly search for cause-and-effect relationships. They like to hypothesize ("If we do..., then you know what might happen?").

Fours love to talk. They love talking to anyone who will listen. They are interested in the sounds of words, in rhyming and nonsense words. They are fascinated by the power of words and are beginning to want to see their own words in print.

The Classroom

The prekindergarten classroom is a place of action. Children and teachers are continually on the move. The children seem to be everywhere at once. Their bodies are in motion. Their hands are touching, investigating, gesturing, creating. They use every inch of space. Some stand to work; others sit at child-sized tables. The floor is a favorite place to sit with a puzzle, to stretch out with a book, or to huddle in a corner for a chat with a friend.

The classroom is also alive with sounds of children at work: the clicking and clattering of wooden blocks; scissors snipping; water swishing; chairs scraping; hammers tapping and pounding; pegs rattling; the thumping and smacking of clay; and feet stepping, scuffing, and skipping. Under and over it all is the hum of children's voices, punctuated every so often with squeals and giggles, howls of anger, bursts of song, or whoops of delight.

To a visitor, the prekindergarten classroom might seem at first glance to be chaotic. But a closer look reveals an intrinsic order. The classroom is carefully set up; materials have been arranged to create specific activity areas. Children quickly learn how to use the multitude of resources - how to find what they need and where things go when they are finished. This structure allows children to make independent choices and encourages purposeful activity. Flexibility of arrangements provides for creative use of space, as the children's play flows into all areas of the room.

A "Snapshop" Portrait of a Prekindergarten Classroom

At the easel, Michael and Theresa are talking excitedly as they paint, calling each other to look at the new colors they are creating. Close by, Tony, Maria, and Latanya are working with playdough and conversing animatedly. Ms. Brown, the educational assistant sitting with them, manages to keep up conversations with all three, as well as with the two children at the easel.

"Look, Ms. Brown, see what I made with my playdough!"

"I see, Tony. Is that a snake or a worm?"

"A worm."

"Can you make a house for your worm to hide in?"

"I'm making a cake for you, Ms. Brown."

"Oh thank you, Maria. Call me when it's ready."

"Okay. I'm going to put candles on it, because it's your birthday."

"Oh, good. I love birthdays. How many candles are you going to put on it?"

"Five. You're going to be five years old."

"Ms. Brown, look! I made green. Like in the army!"

"That's a nice green, Michael. Do you remember how you made it?"

"I put some of this yellow paint on top of the blue and then I put a little red. And look what Theresa made."

"You made a gold color, didn't you, Theresa?"

"And look what you made with your playdough, Latanya. What an interesting shape. I see Maria's cake is ready. Are you going to sing to me before I blow out the candles?"

All five children start singing, "Happy Birthday".

* * * * *

Across the room, Derrick, Matthew, and Amanda are working at the water table. All are intensely absorbed. The boys are pouring green water into a series of bottles through tubes attached to funnels. Amanda is trying to draw water up into a plastic baster. Ms. Richards, the teacher, comments on the boys' work as she passes by, and stops to show Amanda how to work the baster.

Ms. Richards moves on from there to join Will and Rebecca, who have been looking at books together on the rug. As Ms. Richards sits down with them, Mark skips over to show her what he has made with the Lego bricks. Just then, she notices Emily about to leave her unfinished puzzle on the table and suggests that Mark ask Emily if he can help her finish the puzzle. She adds that, if they wish, they can join her on the rug when they finish.

* * * * *

In the meantime, Rosa, Jennifer, and Kevin have been dressing up. The two girls, in grown-up clothes, are taking their babies to the supermarket. "Do you want us to get anything for you?" Rosa calls as they wave goodbye to Kevin. Kevin, who is industriously cooking dinner at the play stove, calls back, "Get some more milk for the babies. And we need some more beans."

Michael at the easel hears this exchange and calls out, "I'm going shopping, too!" and asks Theresa to help him untie his apron. Ms. Brown gets up to write Tony's name on his painting and hang it up. Ms. Richards says, "Would you tell the children it's almost cleanup time? Ask Tony if he'll get the bucket and sponges to wash the dough table."

Teachers and Staff

Within all this fluid motion, bustling activity, and confusion of noises, the teachers and staff provide the structure and guidance necessary to keep it all going and to ensure that the children are developing all of their potential. The teachers seem to have eyes in the backs of their heads and ears like radar, tuning in to the needs of each child.

They are always there, observing how children are using materials, so they can plan for the next step, ready to respond when children need help - to resolve conflicts or solve problems, to move from one activity to the next, to find something - or just to listen and to help children share their thoughts, feelings, and ideas. Teachers and staff are there for the children, to provide them with warmth, care, protection, and nurturing, and to help them become confident and competent learners.

How Children Learn

CHILDREN LEARN THROUGH PLAY

Play is children's work. Through play, children integrate experiences to form concepts. The prekindergarten program is designed to provide large blocks of time for free-choice play activities.

MOTIVATION TO LEARN IS INTRINSIC

Children are learners from birth. Too many adult-directed activities, drills, and rote-learning can interfere with the child's excitement in learning. It is important to keep alive the child's natural curiosity and drive to learn.

Prekindergarten teachers can help children continue to be self-initiating and self-directed learners by providing opportunities for children to make choices and decisions.

CHILDREN LEARN BY DOING

Abstract thinking develops from concrete experiences. Activities for four-year-olds should invite children to explore with all their senses.

CHILDREN LEARN AND REMEMBER BEST WHEN CONTENT IS RELEVANT

Curriculum should be based on children's interests. Skills and concepts can be developed through children's deep involvement in meaningful activities.

ALL LEARNING IS INTERRELATED

Materials and activities in the prekindergarten program are selected to provide opportunities for multidimensional integrated learning.

CHILDREN LEARN BY TALKING ABOUT THEIR ACTIVITIES

Young children need responsive adults to listen and ask questions, to help children articulate their ideas, and to make connections.

Section 1
FIRST DAYS

FIRST DAYS

Introduction

During the first days, the teacher helps the parents and children adjust to the new school experience and encourages the parents to stay with their children during the first two one-hour sessions. As parents and children explore the classroom together, their growing familiarity with the new environment will help to ease any anxiety they may have been feeling about prekindergarten.

It is highly recommended that the teacher focus on establishing daily routines and schedules during the first days and weeks. The consistency of format will give children a feeling of security during this crucial period.

Materials in the interest areas are introduced gradually. The teacher and paraprofessional circulate around the room to assist children in learning how to handle the materials correctly. Children move freely from one interest area to another as they work independently in small groups. These experiences allow them to observe, explore, experiment, and discover.

When the class meets in a large group, children who do not feel ready to join the group may continue to work quietly or observe the group while sitting close by.

A caring and consistent introduction to prekindergarten lays the foundation for a happy and confident school experience.

TIME SCHEDULES

Suggested Time Schedule (First Week)

The following suggested schedule for the first week is flexible. Different provisions can be made in response to the needs of the children and parents.

Monday and Tuesday (or entire first week)

One-Hour Sessions

Half of group, eight children and parents, will attend from 9:00-10:00 A.M. (12:30-1:30 P.M.). The other half will attend from 10:30-11:30 A.M. (2:00-3:00 P.M.)

Parents are encouraged to stay with their children for the first two one-hour sessions.

Depending on the needs of the children and community, this schedule may be extended one more day.

Wednesday, Thursday and Friday

All the children will attend for their regular 2 1/2-hour class session

Full-day programs will follow the half-day schedule for the entire first week.

Sample Welcome Letter

(To be discussed with and approved by the principal)

School Name
Address   Date

Dear (Parent's name):

Welcome to prekindergarten!

Your child, (child's full name) is assigned to class (class designation), which meets every school day (or Monday through Thursday) from 8:40-11:10 A.M. (12:30-3:00 P.M).

This is the schedule for the first week of school:

Monday, October 1	(9:00 - 10:00 A.M.)
Tuesday, October 2	(9:00 - 10:00 A.M.)
Wednesday, October 3	(8:40 - 11:10 A.M.)
Thursday, October 4	(8:40 - 11:10 A.M.)
Friday, October 5	(8:40 - 11:10 A.M.)

We want very much for you to join the class for the first two days. Please make arrangements to stay with us during the first two sessions. If you think there will be any difficulty in making such arrangements, such as getting someone to care for your younger children, please let me know before the first session. I can be reached at (telephone number).

I look forward to seeing you on Monday, October 1.

Sincerely,

Teacher's Signature,
Prekindergarten Teacher

Suggested First Week Time Schedules

One-Hour Session

Sample Plan

Arrival (Approximately 5-10 minutes)

Welcome each child and parent individually. Help children to put on name tags.

Exploring the Interest Areas (Approximately 25 minutes)

Children and parents move freely from one interest area to another as they explore the materials together.

The teacher and educational assistant circulate around the room, talking to and assisting parents and children.

About five minutes before the informal gathering, the teacher quietly tells each parent and child, "We will be meeting together in a few minutes. Please begin to put the materials away. If you need to use the bathroom, a good time will be after the materials are put away. The bathroom is ____________."

Informal Gathering (Approximately 10-15 minutes)

(Some children may not be ready to join the group. They may wish to continue working quietly in an interest area, or to observe the group while sitting close by.)

The teacher invites the children to come to the meeting area by singing a song. It may be an invented song singing new words to a familiar melody, such as:

> Sonia come sit next to me
> next to me
> next to me
> Sonia come sit next to me
> next to me today!

(Sing to the tune of "Mary Had a Little Lamb.")

The teacher invites the children to join in learning a finger play.

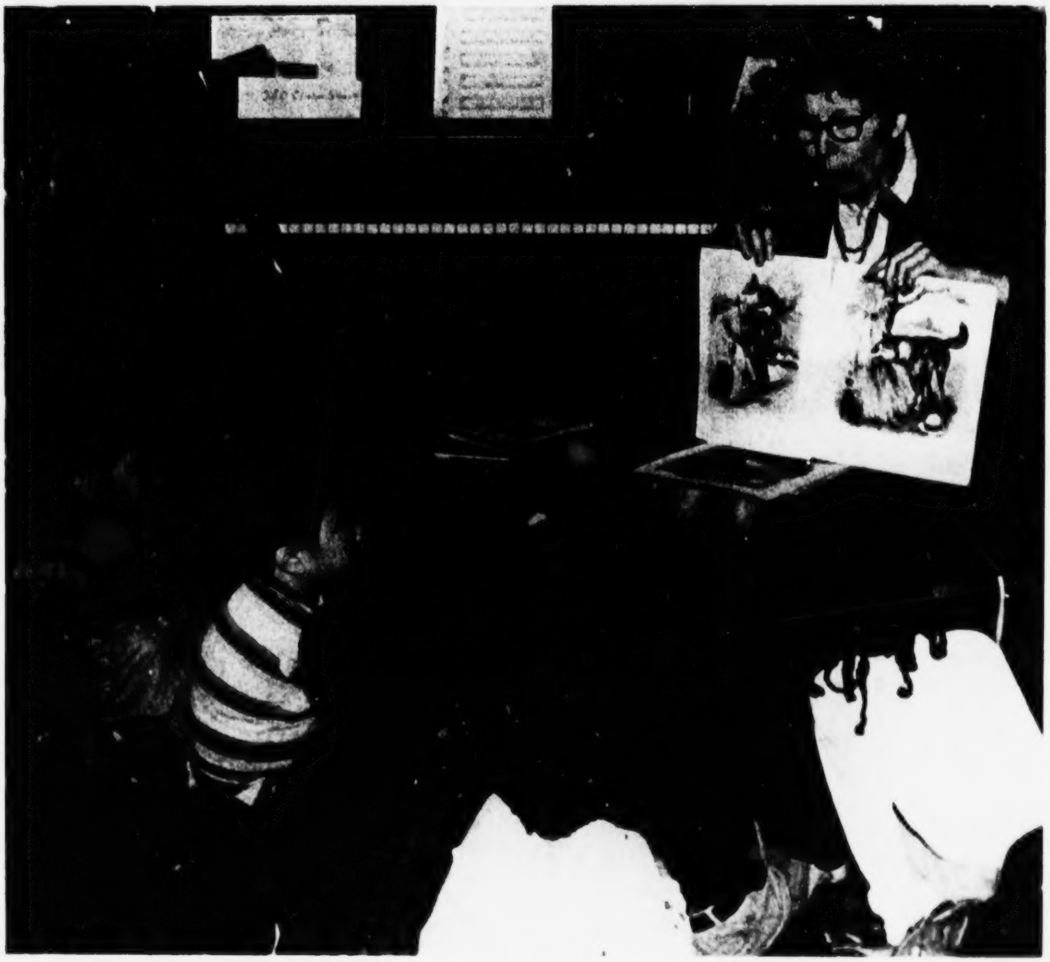
Sample Finger Play

Open, shut them. Open, shut them.	(Open and shut hands)
Give a little clap, clap, clap.	(Clap 3 times)
Open, shut them. Open, shut them.	(Open and shut hands)
Put them in your lap, lap, lap.	(Place hands in lap 3 times)
Creep them, crawl them. Creep them, crawl them.	(Crawl fingers along body from the waist to the chin)
Right up to your chin, chin, chin.	(Tap chin with fingers 3 times)
Open wide your little mouth, But do not let them in!	(Open mouth) (Quickly hide hands behind back)

Read a Story

The teacher selects a large picture book to read aloud to the children. The teacher tells the children, "I have a special book I want to share with you today."

After the story is read, the teacher may say, "Tomorrow I will read another special book to you."



Preparation for Dismissal

The teacher assists the children in putting their name tags away.

Letters to parents may be distributed. (See sample following.)

The teacher sings a song to the tune, "Hello Everybody."

Goodbye everybody
yes indeed
yes indeed
yes indeed,

Goodbye everybody,
yes indeed
yes indeed, my darling!

Goodbye _Kara_ and _Baquia_
yes indeed
yes indeed
yes indeed,

Goodbye _Kara_ and _Baquia_
yes indeed
yes indeed, my darling!

(Repeat this section
include all children)

We'll see you tommorow
yes indeed
yes indeed
yes indeed,

We'll see you tomorrow
yes indeed,
yes indeed, my darling!

Sample Letter

(To be reviewed by the principal)

School Name
Address
Date

Dear (Parent's name:)

I am looking forward to a most successful year for the children in prekindergarten. Many exciting and happy experiences are planned for the class.

Please have your child bring the following items to school by __________:

(1) A small blanket (full-day class only)

(2) A change of clothing. Please label each item with your child's name. (shirt, pants, socks, and underwear). Place all items in a labeled plastic bag.

If you wish to speak with me at any time, please let me know so we can arrange a special time to talk. I can be reached at (phone) between the hours of ____ and ____.

Thank you for all your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Teacher's signature
Prekindergarten Teacher

Note:
The change of clothing is sent home over the winter vacation, to be replaced by a larger set.

Blankets are sent home periodically to be cleaned.

Sample Plan

8:40 A.M. - 9:00 A.M.
Arrival, Greetings, Informal Conversation

The teacher greets each child and parent individually.

The children are assisted in putting on their name tags and placing personal belongings in their cubbies.

Children may work individually or in small groups with simple puzzles, table toys, and books.

Transition: About five minutes before the informal class meeting the teacher quietly tells each child, "We will all be meeting by the piano in a few minutes. You need to start putting away your materials now. You can play with them again later if you want to!"

9:00 A.M. - 9:10 A.M.
Class Meeting (Informal)

(Some children may not be ready to join the group. Allow them to continue working quietly with a table toy or to observe the group while sitting nearby.)

Transition: The teacher invites the children to come to the meeting area by singing a song. It may be singing new words to a familiar melody. To help the children establish routines, the same song is sung at meeting time every day for the first week.

Example: (to the tune of "Here We Go 'Round the Mulberry Bush")

If you're wearing
a red dress
a red dress
a red dress
If you're wearing
a red dress
Come sit next to me.

After all the children are sitting in an informal group, the teacher introduces each child by singing a simple song and doing the action along with the child.

Example:

If your name is Kara,
clap your hands
clap your hands
clap your hands.

If your name is Brian,
nod your head
nod your head
nod your head.

After every child's name is sung, the teacher talks about the day's plans and the different interest areas children may choose.

Children choose their interest areas.

9:10 A.M. - 9:55 A.M.
Work/Play Period

Opportunities are provided for child-initiated work/play, individually or in small groups, in the different interest areas. The children move freely from one area to another as they explore the materials.

Interest Areas (First two weeks)

Active Play
Art Center
Discovery Table
Housekeeping Center
Library/Listening Center
Table Toys

The teacher and paraprofessional circulate around the room, talking to and assisting the children.

Transistion: Cleanup

Approximately ten minutes before story time, the teacher quietly tells each child, "I am going to read a story to everyone soon, so you need to start putting your materials away now. You will be able to play with them again tomorrow if you want to."

The teacher and paraprofessional help the children in learning how to put the materials away properly.

9:55 A.M. - 10:10 A.M.
Story Time

(Children who do not feel ready to join in a large group may continue to work quietly or to observe the group while sitting nearby.)

The teacher invites the children to come to the meeting area by singing new words to a familiar melody. (The same song is sung at story time each day for the first two weeks.)

Example: (to the tune of "Mary Had a Little Lamb")	Sonia come sit next to me, next to me next to me Sonia come sit next to me next to me today!

The teacher invites the children to join in learning a simple finger play.

Example: The eency weency spider
Went up the water spout.

Down came the rain
And washed the spider out.

Out came the sun
And dried up all the rain

And the eency weency spider
Went up the spout again.

Read a Story

The teacher selects a large picture book to read aloud to the children.

The teacher tells the children, "I have a special book I want to share with you today."

After the story is read the teacher tells the children, "I will read another special book to you tommorow."

10:10 - 10:30 A.M.

Active Play: Music/Movement (Outdoors)

Children respond, individually and as a group, to the beat of the drum through body movements (jumping, marching, clapping.)

Children use large muscles with equipment in outdoor play area.

10:35 - 10:55 A.M.

Lunch

Before lunch, the teacher and paraprofessional help the children in learning proper sink and bathroom routines.

Prepare for lunch.

Lunch.

10:55 A.M. - 11:10 A.M.

Dismissal

The teacher and paraprofessional guide the children in putting their name tags away and getting personal belongings out of their cubbies.

The teacher sings:

Goodbye everybody
yes indeed
yes indeed
yes indeed,

Goodbye Amy and Jackie
yes indeed
yes indeed, my darling!

(Repeat this verse to include all children.)

We'll see you tomorrow
yes indeed
yes indeed
yes indeed,

We'll see you tomorrow
yes indeed
yes indeed, my darling!

Parent/Child Separation

Parents and children come to school with a unique collection of experiences. Some children have successfully participated in large social groups in school-like settings, and approach prekindergarten eagerly. Other children have never participated in a group experience and may need to adjust slowly. Parents also have different school memories, some happy, some not.

Teacher and Parent

The varying needs of the parents during the adjustment period must be handled carefully and caringly. The teacher and parents work together to form a bridge between school and home. In some cases, the teacher may need to meet privately with parents to plan individualized programs involving teacher, parent (or other family member), child, and family assistant.

The parents may be experiencing considerable anxiety at this time. On the one hand, they feel pride in their child's blossoming independence, but they may also have feelings of sadness that their child is no longer a baby.

Prekindergarten teachers work with families and understand individual styles of separation. Parents who are having a difficult time are encouraged to accept their own feelings as well as those of their child. They are helped to understand that other parents experience similiar difficulties, and that crying, which is often an expression by child or parent of these painful feelings, is okay.

When parents are welcomed and made to feel comfortable in the school setting, these warm feelings are transmitted to the children. To facilitate a smooth adjustment period, parents are encouraged to stay with their children for at least the first two one-hour sessions of prekindergarten. A parent never "sneaks away" without the child's knowledge, as feelings of mutual trust are vital for a successful, comfortable parent-child separation.

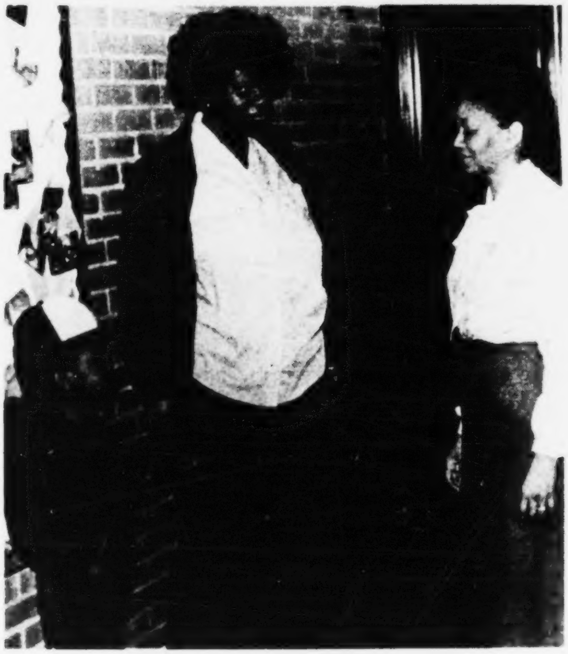
Teacher and Child

The teacher helps with the transition by verbalizing some of the child's feelings: "I see you miss your daddy today. Your daddy is going to come back (or is sitting in the hall) and will take you home after we have snack. Right after clean-up we are going to have snack, and then daddy will come to get you."

The teacher affirms that the child will be taken care of while daddy is gone. The teacher may say, "If there is something in the classroom that you need, tell me and I will get it for you. I am here to help you and the other children, and to take care of everyone."

Children need to know that, at the end of the class, the parent will always come to get them. If the parent is late, an adult (preferably the teacher) stays with the child and tries to contact the home.

The adjustment period will affect the child's future feelings about school. A happy and confident beginning leads to a positive attitude toward future school experiences.



Materials for the First Days

Materials are introduced slowly. During the first days and weeks, when routines and responsibilities are being established, materials are few in number and carefully chosen. Choose simple equipment that can be manipulated independently and easily stored.

The following is a suggested list of materials for the interest areas during the first days:

Active Play

- Climber
- Steps

Art Center

- Chalk and chalkboard
- Paper and crayons
- Brushes and water for waterpainting

Block Center

- Single units (square shaped)
- Double units (rectangle shaped)
- Hollow blocks
- A few accessories: one truck, one car, one airplane

Discovery Table

- A special attraction, such as a bowl filled with goldfish, may be provided to invite children's interest during arrival time.

Housekeeping Center

- The following accessories may be added to the furniture in the housekeeping area:

  - Dishes (4 plates, 4 cups)
  - Silverware (4 forks, 4 spoons)
  - 1 or 2 pots; 1 or 2 pans
  - 1 teakettle
  - 2 dolls (2 different skin tones)
  - 1 or 2 telephones
  - Small selection of easily handled dress-up clothes, e.g., men's and women's shoes (without laces), handbags, briefcase

Library

- Multiple copies of books, with and without words, containing large illustrations.

Listening Center

- Record player with records for the children to listen to during the day.
- Records by: (suggestions)

  - Ella Jenkins
  - Hap Palmer
  - Raffi
  - Pete Seeger

Table Toys (similar items may be substituted)

- Simple puzzles (multiples of some)
- Pegboards and pegs
- Beads and string
- Bristle blocks

Section 2

CREATING A LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

38

CREATING A LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Room Arrangement

Room arrangement has a direct impact on the prekindergarten child. Children concentrate better when they are not distracted by other activities. In order to support the development of a sense of independence and creativity, the classroom environment should be structured and well organized.

Efficient use of the classroom is determined by size and shape of the room, the furniture and equipment to be used, the age and interests of the children, and the number of children and adults who will be using it.

Since the children's needs and interests vary as the year progresses, the selection of furniture and equipment, and the way in which they are arranged, should allow for flexibility. The year should begin with a simplified environment, when children are beginning to identify objects in the room and learning how to use them, as well as distinguishing between those that are the same and those that are different.

The room should be inviting and comfortable, well organized and clean. In a well planned environment, learning can be an exciting, joyful experience.

Suggestions

- Shelves or dividers should be low enough to permit adult observation and supervision, but high enough for children to feel that the space is separate and enclosed.

- All materials should be identified with pictures, or color-coded symbols and, later in the year, with the printed names of the items. They should be in the same place every day. Children should know where the materials are, and be able to get and replace them with ease. Children find it more convenient to use materials that are placed sparingly on shelves, and not stacked. Shelves should not be cluttered with too many items. Interest is kept high when materials are changed frequently.

Interest areas in the room should include several of the following:

- Plants
- Animals
- Blocks
- Dramatic Play
- Cooking
- Creative Arts
- Discovery Table
- Library/Listening
- Music/Movement
- Manipulatives
- Sand
- Water
- Woodworking
- Active Play

- Areas for quieter, less active play should be separated from areas for noisier, more active play.

- A cozy place containing cushions, carpet remnants, or pillows should be provided, so children can curl up to look at books, or play and talk quietly.

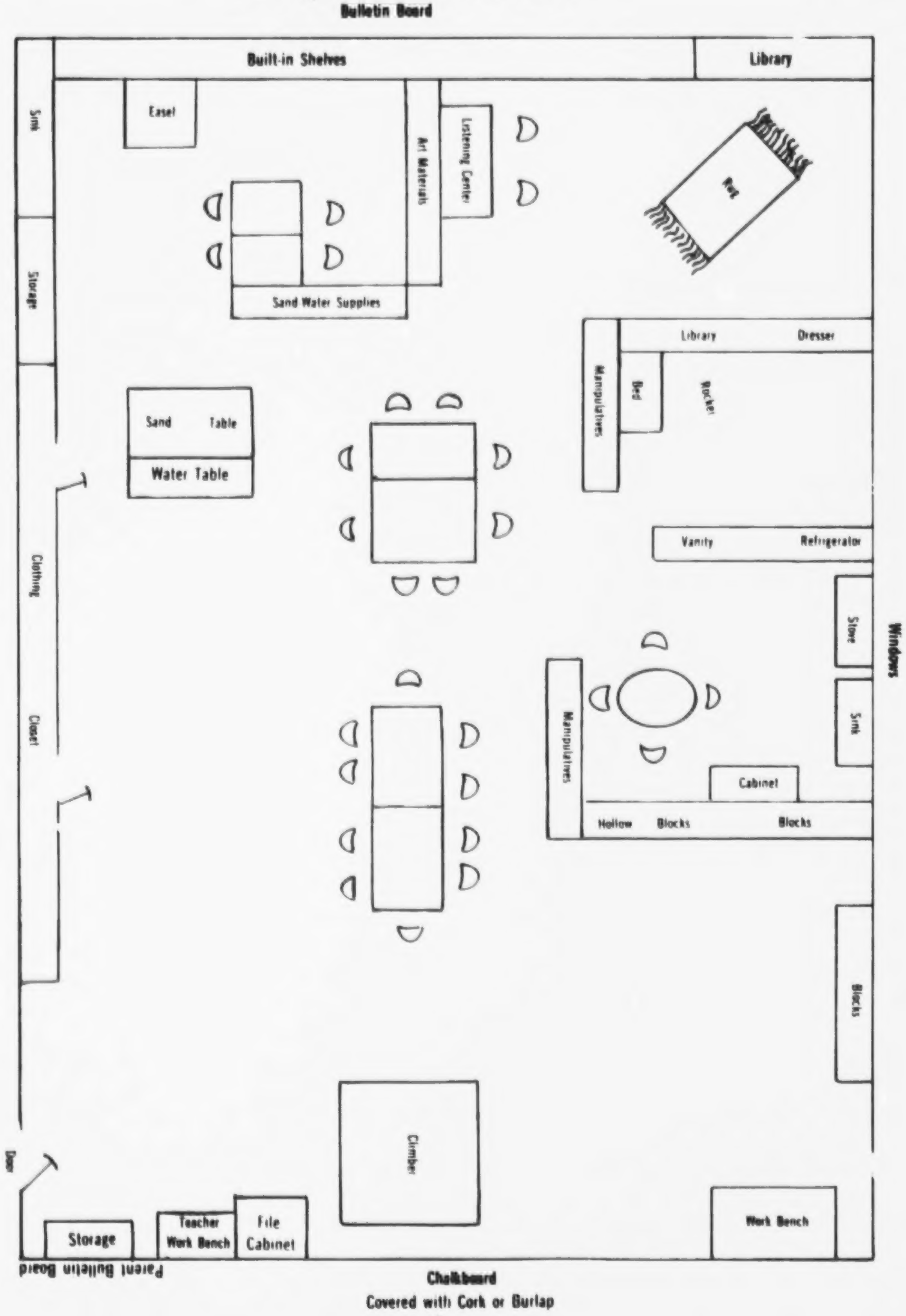
- The block area should be placed far from the door and cubbies, outside the flow of traffic.

- Areas should be provided for small group activities as well as for large groups, and spaces for sitting on the floor, in addition to chairs.

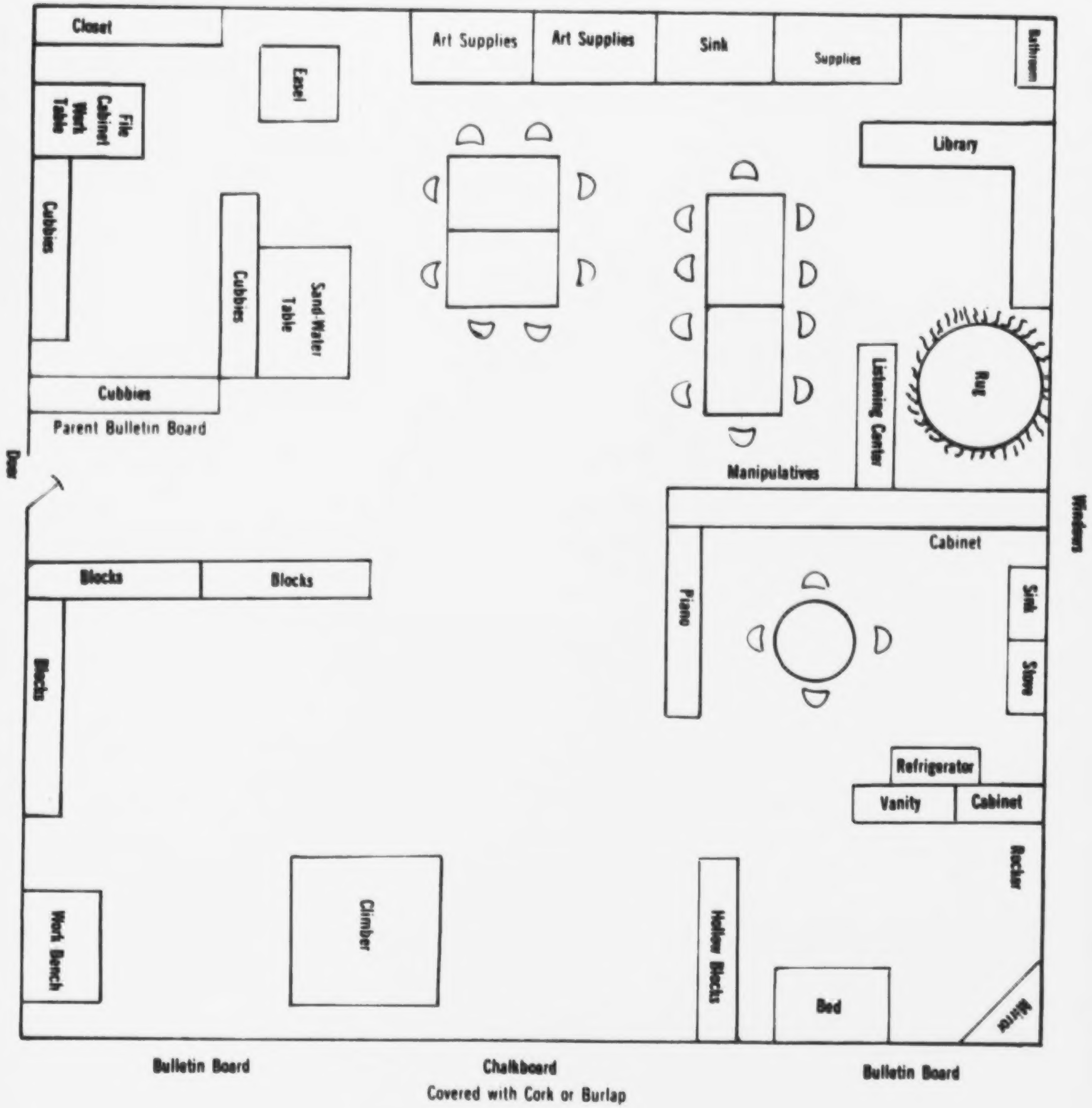
- A meeting area should be provided for the whole group.

- Following are three suggested room arrangements:

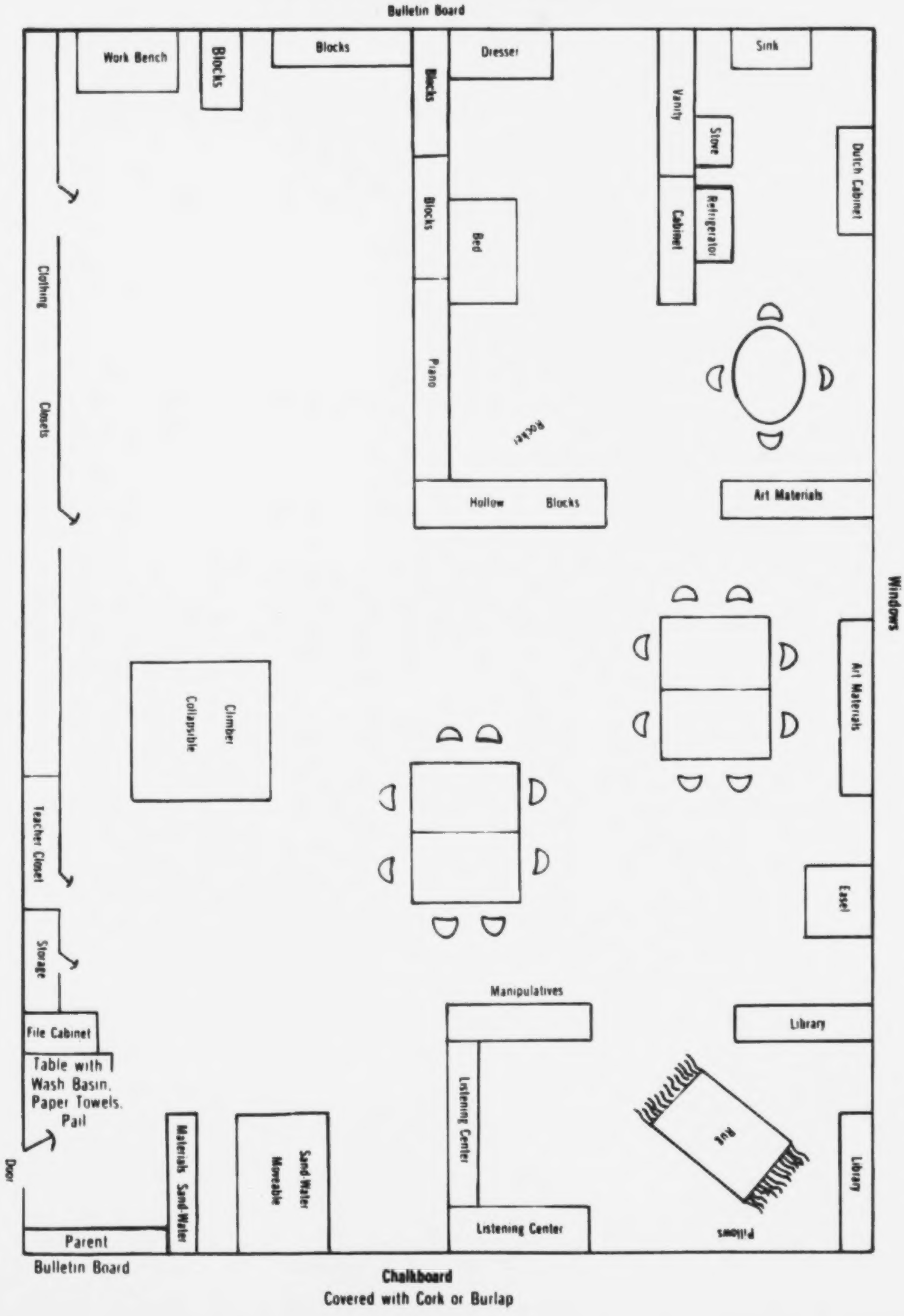
Sample Floor Plan A


Bulletin Board
Built-in Shelves
Library
Sink
Easel
Art Materials
Listening Center
Rug
Storage
Sand Water Supplies
Library
Dresser
Manipulatives
Bed
Rocker
Sand Table
Water Table
Vanity
Refrigerator
Clothing
Closet
Stove
Windows
Sink
Manipulatives
Cabinet
Hollow Blocks
Blocks
Blocks
Climber
Door
Storage
Teacher Work Bench
File Cabinet
Work Bench
Parent Bulletin Board
Chalkboard
Covered with Cork or Burlap

Sample Floor Plan B


Closet
Art Supplies
Art Supplies
Sink
Supplies
Bathroom
Easel
File Cabinet
Work Table
Library
Cubbies
Cubbies
Sand-Water Table
Rug
Listening Center
Cubbies
Parent Bulletin Board
Manipulatives
Door
Windows
Cabinet
Piano
Blocks
Blocks
Sink
Blocks
Stove
Refrigerator
Vanity
Cabinet
Rocker
Climber
Work Bench
Hollow Blocks
Bed
Mirror
Bulletin Board
Chalkboard
Covered with Cork or Burlap
Bulletin Board

Sample Floor Plan C


Bulletin Board
Work Bench
Blocks
Blocks
Blocks
Dresser
Sink
Vanity
Stove
Dutch Cabinet
Blocks
Cabinet
Refrigerator
Bed
Clothing
Piano
Closets
Rocker
Hollow Blocks
Art Materials
Windows
Climber Collapsible
Art Materials
Teacher Closet
Easel
Storage
Manipulatives
File Cabinet
Library
Table with Wash Basin, Paper Towels, Pail
Listening Center
Rug
Materials Sand-Water
Sand-Water Moveable
Library
Door
Listening Center
Pillows
Parent
Bulletin Board
Chalkboard
Covered with Cork or Burlap

Classroom Management

Young children need to feel confident and secure in a stable, supportive environment. Careful classroom management allows the teacher to achieve this goal by establishing routines and responsibilities. The structure should be clear enough to meet group needs, yet flexible enough to allow for individuality. Prekindergarten children are often attending school for the first time; they need to know what is expected of them and what they can expect from others. A daily routine with a familiar sequence of events helps them to adapt more easily to the school experience.

Young children need clear and simple directions. At the beginning of the school term, they may be able to follow only one direction at a time. It is a good idea to introduce routines by breaking them down into small steps, and modeling appropriate behaviors: "Pick up your chair like this" ... pause ... "Walk to the story circle like this" ... pause ... "Sit down in the circle" ... pause. Explaining, rehearsing, and practicing each routine will help children internalize behaviors and follow good classroom practices. In the process, the children will feel safe and competent. ("I can do it!")

While developing and implementing appropriate classroom routines, the teacher should be sure that the children have enough time to explore materials freely, make their own discoveries, and socialize with one another.

Four-year-olds develop at different rates and with individual timetables. They are also at different places on different days. The teacher who accepts these variations with patience and encouragement provides a fertile atmosphere for children's learning and growth.

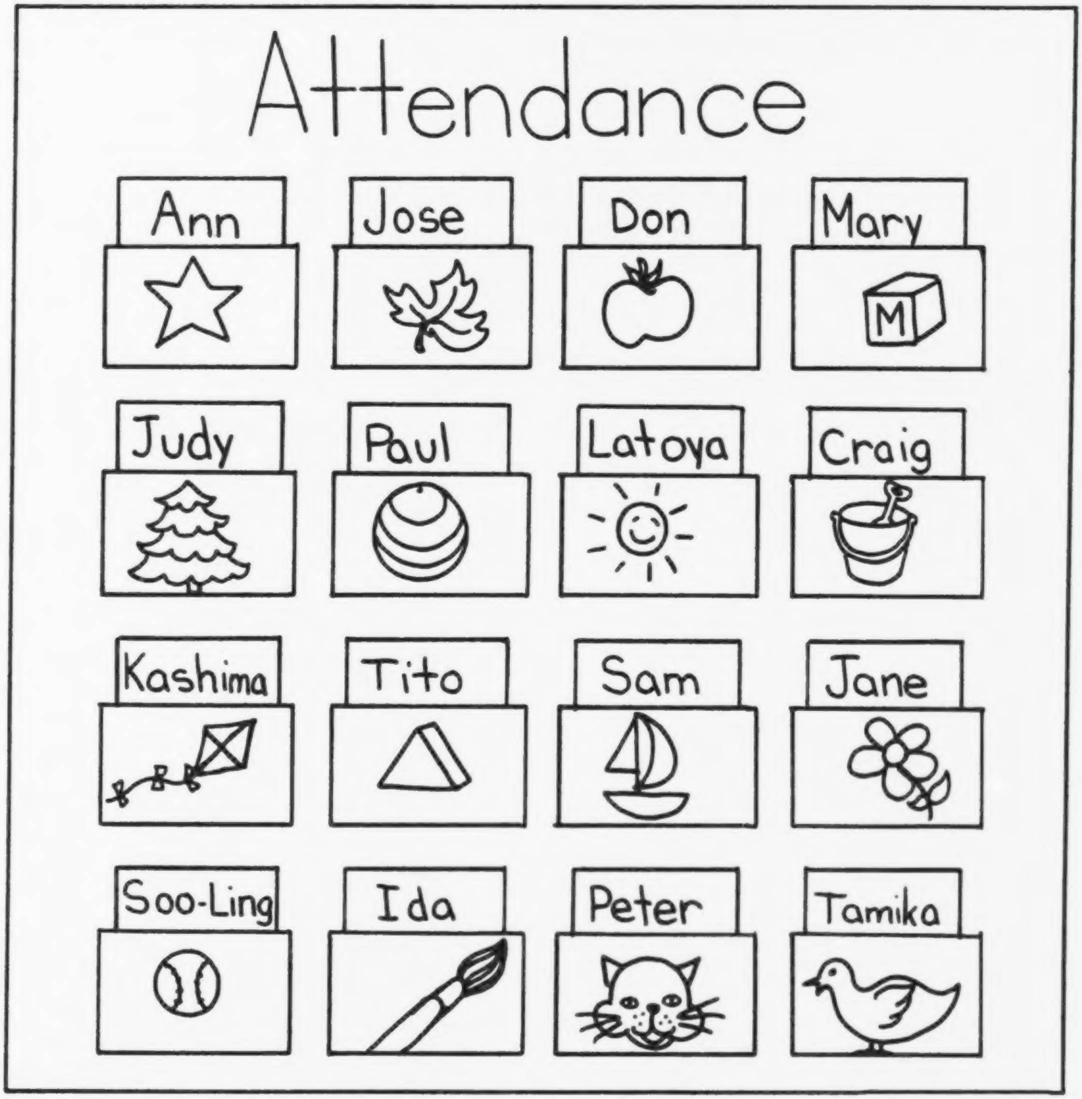
Beginning the Day

During the first days of school, name tags or colored shapes can be affixed to the children's cubbies. Children can help with this activity. A matching symbol for each child can be used on an attendance chart. When youngsters arrive each day, they place their clothing and other belongings in their cubbies. Some children may wish to bring a small blanket to school for rest time. After using the attendance chart, the children can find table activities which interest them. Such activities may be puzzles, games, books, or quiet toys.

Establishing this routine allows the teacher to greet children individually as they enter the room, and also allows time to talk to parents and respond to any of their concerns. The paraprofessional or other adult can assist the children as needed.

Attendance

One routine which can be established during the first weeks of school is using the attendance chart. Children indicate their arrival each day by turning over an oaktag card in a pocket chart. The teacher prints the children's names on the cards, or attaches colored shapes or other symbols. Children sometimes draw their own faces on the cards. Small photographs may also be used for this purpose. The word "HERE" and the child's name can be written on the reverse side of the card. At dismissal time, each child turns the card to its original side. The pocket chart may look like this:


Attendance
Ann
Jose
Don
Mary
M
Judy
Paul
Latoya
Craig
Kashima
Tito
Sam
Jane
Soo-Ling
Ida
Peter
Tamika

Tip: Use library pockets and index cards covered with clear plastic for longer use. When child turns over attendance card, both names will be matching.

Meetings

Meetings provide prekindergarten children with a sense of belonging, and allow time to talk about common problems, interests, and needs. Depending on room arrangement and size, the group meeting place may consist of individual mats or a carpeted area. All children should have a clear view of the teacher and of any materials presented to the group at this time.

As a class meeting may be one of the first times that children are expected to take part in a "formal" group experience, the prekindergarten teacher has flexible expectations, and is patient with each child's readiness to participate.

During the first weeks of school, the teacher will need to guide the children to the group area. If directions are simple and clearly stated, children will not run into each other, but will move easily to the meeting place. The second adult in the room assists children in moving correctly, and can attend to those still waiting their turn. The teacher might say:

> "Samuel, come to the meeting. Please sit here."
> "Tamika, please come. Sit next to Samuel. Good."
> "Andre, come to the meeting. Sit near Tamika. I like the way you did that."

After all the children have arrived at the meeting place, singing a song will make this transition a pleasant one. Some suggestions follow:

A Marching We Will Go*

A marching we will go
A marching we will go
We're marching to a meeting
A marching we will go

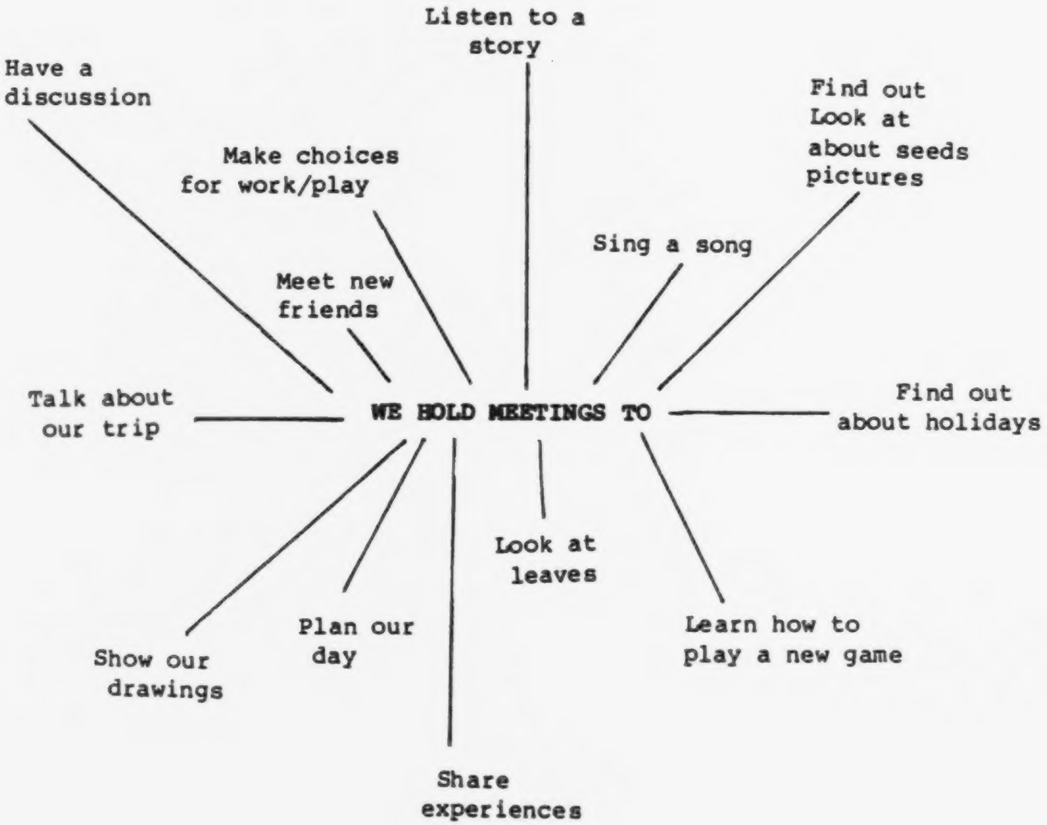
We're sitting in our chairs (on the floor)
We're sitting in our chairs
We're ready for the meeting
We're sitting in our chairs

*Sung to the tune of "Farmer in the Dell"

Together

The more we get together,
Together, together,
The more we get together,
The happier we'll be.
There's Jimmy, and Susan,
And Henry, and Ben,
I see Mary and Twanna
and Jose again,
The more we get together
The happier we'll be.

The teacher generally approaches the meeting with a plan. The children are given opportunities to talk about their experiences, which will create an ongoing curriculum for the class. The sensitive teacher responds to the children's cues, and finds materials, books, or activities to stimulate further explorations.


Listen to a story
Have a discussion
Find out
Look at
about seeds
pictures
Make choices for work/play
Sing a song
Meet new friends
Talk about our trip
WE HOLD MEETINGS TO
Find out about holidays
Look at leaves
Learn how to play a new game
Plan our day
Show our drawings
Share experiences

It is important to talk about the plan for the day at the morning meeting. Children's choices for work/play areas and special activities, such as planting or cooking, can be discussed at this time.

At other times, the teacher may wish to call the children together for specific reasons:

> "Boys and girls, come to the meeting area.
> We seem to have a problem in the block corner."
>
> "Boys and girls, come to the meeting area.
> Mrs. Harris just brought in some baby snails.
> Let's all look at them."

The teacher may wish to prepare for meetings by presenting children with open-ended stimuli. One technique is to have something new displayed on a table near the door. The children's natural curiosity will initiate discussion about their discovery.

Suggested Open-Ended Materials

Empty box

Seashells

Nuts

Small pet

Worms in a jar

Rocks

Kite

Hammer

Apples

Feathers

A pumpkin, unscooped, but
with its top cut off and replaced

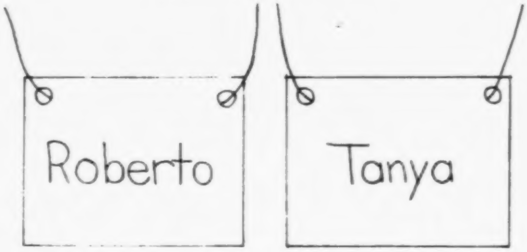
Short meetings may be held before dismissal to review the day's activities and plan for the next day:

> "Boys and girls, we changed apples into applesauce today. Who remembers what we did first?"
>
> "Mrs. Smith will be here tomorrow morning to play the piano and teach us a new song."

Transitions

Transitions are those moments between activities when the teacher wishes to assure a smooth flow in the change of children's focus. When young children are involved in an activity, they often feel disrupted if asked to complete that task and move on to another. Teachers can help by announcing any impending change and allowing adequate "wait" time for most of the children to finish. Children who have not finished may save their work by placing a Name Marker on it, or moving it to a safe place until another time. If another adult is present, that person may assist those children who are not yet ready to join the group.

Name Markers



Transitions occur when:

- one activity ends and another begins
- children stop for snack
- children are asked to form a circle
- work/play period ends and cleanup begins
- children get ready to go outdoors to play
- children come to the meeting area
- rest time begins
- the last activity of the day is completed and children get ready for dismissal

Teachers develop individual styles for handling these situations. Some sing a song, or play a familiar melody on the piano. Others use the record player. A triangle may be used to signal a change of activities. A verse which may help children move from one area to another is:

We Change Place*

The day moves on and we change place
We change place
We change place
The day moves on and we change place
We change what we do

Now we go from cleanup time (or other activity)
Cleanup time
Cleanup time
Now we go from cleanup time
We go outdoors to play (or other activity)

*Sung to the tune of "Mary Had a Little Lamb"

This verse may be repeated by changing the various colors and types of clothing.

Some games which can be used for transitions are:

"If you are wearing sneakers, come to the table."
"If you are wearing boots, come to the table."
"If you are wearing shoes with laces, come to the table."

"If you are wearing a blue shirt, come to the rug."
"If you are wearing red pants, come to the rug."
"If you are wearing suspenders, come to the rug."

***

Prepare cards of different colors (3 red, 3 green, 3 blue, 3 orange, and 3 yellow). Distribute the cards to the children.

"If you have a red card, line up to wash your hands.
All the other colors clap your hands.
All the other colors say 'How do you do?'
Hold up green, hold up orange, hold up yellow, hold up blue."

***

Later in the year, the teacher may wish to extend these activities to maintain interest and provide broader learning tasks.

"If you are wearing red, white AND blue put on your coats."
"If you are wearing orange AND purple put on your coats."

***

Activities like these also provide children with basic concepts for categorization and classification, as well as receptive language.

Children move at their own pace. Using one or more of the following fingerplays will keep those who are ready occupied, while encouraging others to hasten to the group:

Clap Your Hands

Clap, your hands, clap, clap
As slowly as you can
Clap, your hands, clap, clap
As quickly as you can

Shake.......
Roll.......
Rub.......
Wiggle your fingers.......
Pound your fists.......
Open and shut.......

Great Big Ball

A great big ball,
(Join hands, fingertips touching to make a big ball)
A middle-sized ball,
(make a smaller ball)
A little ball I see!
(Join thumb and index finger of one hand to make a little ball)
Let's see if we can count them
(Make each of the three balls as they are counted.)
One, two, three.

Behive

Here is a beehive; where are the bees?
(make a fist)
Hiding away where no one sees
Watch them and they will come out of the hive.
One, two, three, four, five. Bzzzzzzzzz
(extend fingers one at a time; move fingers)

Two Little Eyes

Two little eyes that open and close.
Two little ears and one little nose.
Two little cheeks and one little chin.
Two little lips with the teeth closed in.

On My Head

On my head my hands I place,
On my shoulders, on my face,
On my hips and at my side,
Then behind me they will hide.
I will hold them up so high;
Quickly make my fingers fly;
Hold them out in front of me;
Swiftly clap - one, two, three.

Division of Curriculum and Instruction, *Prekindergarten and Kindergarten Curriculum Guide* (Brooklyn, NY: Board of Education of the City of New York, 1965), p. 60.

Five Little Polar Bears

Five little polar bears, (Hold up one hand)
Playing on the shore;
One fell in the water
And then there were four. (Put down one finger
as you say each verse)
Four little polar bears,
Swimming out to sea;
One got lost
And then there were three.

Three little polar bears said
"What shall we do?"
One climbed an iceberg
Then there were two.

Two little polar bears
Playing in the sun;
One went for food
Then there was one.

One little polar bear,
Didn't want to stay;
He said, "I'm lonesome"
And swam far away.

"Five Little Polar Bears" from *Finger Frolics* compiled by Liz Cromwell, Dixie Hibner, and John R. Faitel. (Livonia, MI: Partner Press, 1983), p. 78. Reprinted by permission of the publisher.

Waiting Time

During the school day, prekindergarten children experience times when they must wait to:

- talk to the teacher
- share materials
- begin an activity
- put materials away
- wash their hands
- use the toilet
- join a meeting

Waiting too long makes young children restless. Teachers can minimize waiting time by preparing materials in advance. If a special activity involves working with a small group of children, others may be involved in work/play areas of their choice. The teacher may read a story to the group while a few children set the table for snack time. As children take turns washing their hands, the "waiters" may do fingerplays or recite nursery rhymes. Listening to a record, playing clapping games or "Simon Says" will make waiting a more pleasant experience.

Childhood is precious. It is a time for being active - exploring, discovering, talking, playing, and learning - and growing through all this constant activity. Waiting time should not be wasted time.

Rest Time

Children who attend prekindergarten classes for a full day require a rest period some time in the afternoon. Some children may wish to lie down on mats and close their eyes. Others might enjoy sitting quietly, looking at books or listening to soft music. Half-day programs should also provide for quiet time during each session. A relaxing atmosphere will help children adapt to this routine. The following poem can get children ready for this special time:

Now it's time to rest
Like robins in a nest.
Now it's time to rest
Like robins in a nest.
Tuck your head beneath your wing,
Close your eyes to everything,
Now it's time to rest.

Toileting and Washing

Most prekindergarten classrooms have toilets in the room or close by. Boys and girls generally use the same facilities. Children should learn good bathroom habits. Boys should be encouraged to raise the seats when necessary. All children should try to be tidy and flush properly. Children may need instruction about using the sink and faucets in the room. The teacher can model handwashing procedures for the youngsters, using soap and paper towels. The children should be shown the wastebasket in which to place the used towels. Establishing good toileting routines will help the youngsters observe good health practices. Prekindergarten children should be allowed to use the toilet whenever necessary.

Snack Time

A regularly scheduled snack time is part of every well-planned day for prekindergarten children. It usually occurs during the midmorning or midafternoon, depending on the children's lunch hour. Snack time provides:

- a transition between activities
- a change of pace
- a renewal of energy
- a social occasion

- an opportunity to taste different foods
- a way to learn about good nutrition
- a chance to practice appropriate mealtime behavior

Early in the school year, the adults in the classroom can assume the major responsibility for getting the snack and the snack area ready. As the year progresses, children may begin to take part in these tasks with assistance from the paraprofessional, parent volunteer, or teacher.

Children should always wash their hands before snack time, or before handling any food in the classroom. Placemats, napkins, and paper plates or cups can be placed on the tables to designate a setting for each child. The food may be placed in large containers or bowls, and the juice in child-sized pitchers in the center of the tables, so that children may serve themselves "family style."

Snack Suggestions

VEGETABLES
Carrot Sticks
Celery Sticks
String Beans
Cherry Tomatoes
Cucumber Sticks
Zucchini Sticks
Chinese Vegetables

TASTE TREATS
Avocados
Kiwi Fruits
Pomegranates
Persimmons
Bean Sprouts
Different Kinds of Cheese

FRUITS

Apples (many varieties)
Oranges
Tangerines
Clementines
Melons
Pears
Berries

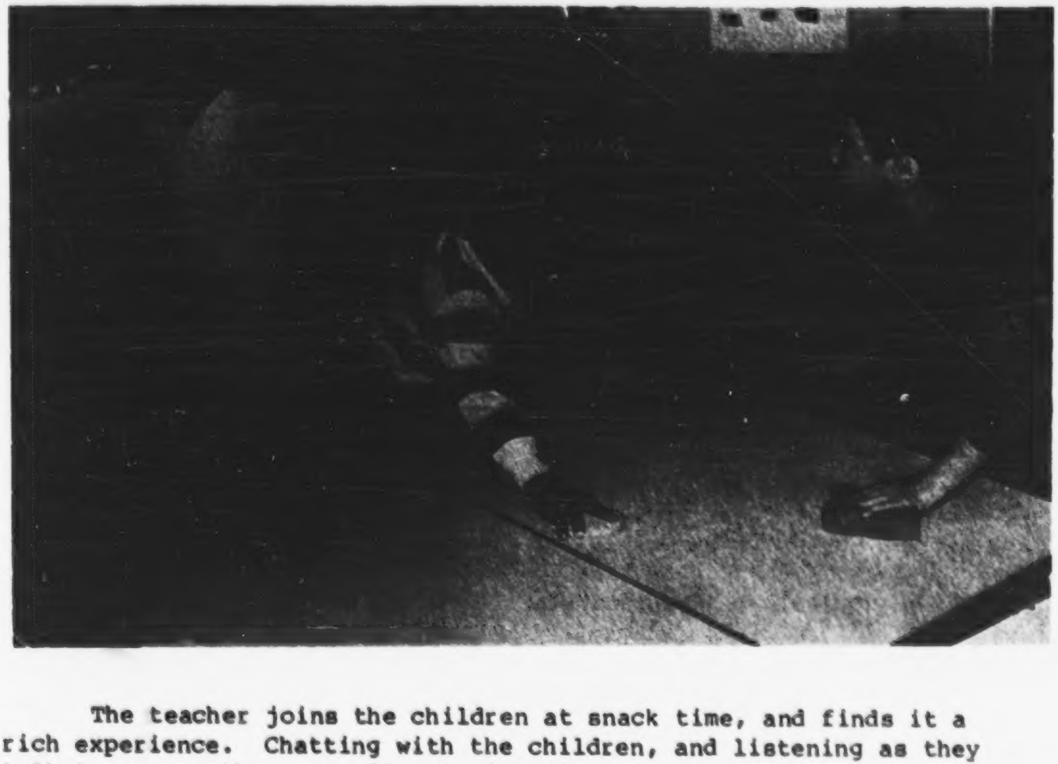
NIBBLES AND BREADS

Crackers
Peanut Butter
Unsalted Nuts
Raisins
Sunflower Seeds
Popcorn
Muffins
Pumpkin Seeds
Breadsticks

Food choices are important. Snack fare should be varied and interesting. Combining different colors, textures, and shapes will make the snack visually appealing. Young children can then be helped to experience the sensory and aesthetic values of food. Class cooking activities often provide food for the snack. Children who have prepared the food earlier in the day will enjoy sharing it with others at this time. Sometimes parents will contribute items for snack time. Such foods may be unfamiliar to some of the children in the class. This is the time to develop appreciation for the diversity of other cultures, and to broaden children's tastes in food.

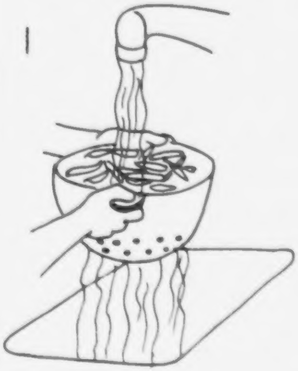
Cleaning up can be handled in several ways. A "clean-up monitor" may go from table to table with a large plastic bag. Another method is to have individual children take their own "throwaways" to the wastebasket for disposal.

Children should be able to sit with friends at snack time, and share experiences and ideas. Snack time helps children grow in independence. It helps them to make choices. It helps them to participate in group living. They should be reminded, from time to time, to change their seats and tables to encourage interaction. Teachers should not become upset about spills and messes, as these are to be expected in prekindergarten. It is a good idea to keep a sponge and mop nearby.

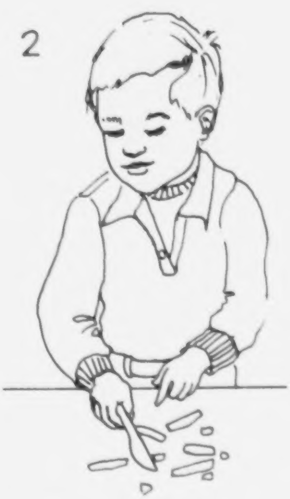


The teacher joins the children at snack time, and finds it a rich experience. Chatting with the children, and listening as they talk to one another, provides insight into their world. It is also a time for informal language and concept development.

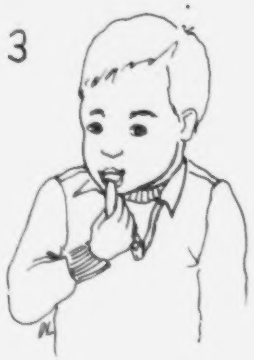
Suggested Recipes for Snack Time



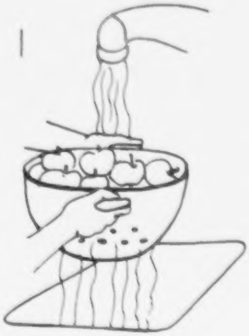
Wash the string beans.



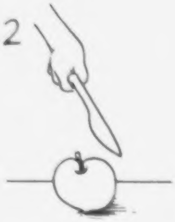
Snip off the ends.



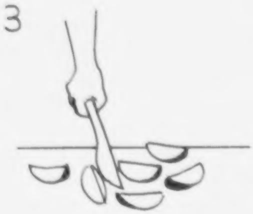
Eat the string beans.



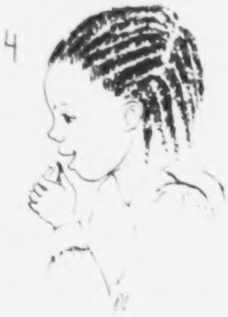
Wash the apples.



Use an apple slicer.



Cut the apple into sections.



Apples are good with cheese.

- . Peanut butter is good on: celery, carrot sticks, crackers, bread

Fire Drills

Fire drills are important routines in the elementary school. Prekindergarten children need to understand the importance of moving quickly and quietly out of the building. Two bells tell the children to stop what they are doing, get their coats, put them on, and wait on line for an additional bell. Three bells signal the children to get on line, and move immediately out of the building. The teacher practices fire drill procedures with the class, familiarizing the children with the nearest exit and with their route outside the building.

Because fire drills may frighten some children, the teacher allows adequate time to get ready, and assumes a calm and confident manner while guiding the class from the school. Fire drills can be discussed at meeting times, so that the children gain an understanding of the necessity for this routine.

Ending the Day

Prekindergarten children need time at the end of the day to:

- put away their work
- collect their belongings
- turn over their attendance cards
- receive going-home papers or notices
- put on outer clothing
- listen to reminders about the next day
- get ready for an orderly dismissal

A special record or favorite song may be reserved just for this going-home period. Allowing sufficient time, and having everything ready for the children, will help make dismissal a pleasant part of the day.

Displaying Children's Work

When children's work is displayed with respect and care, children learn that what they have produced is valued. Bulletin boards and other display areas are functional as well as attractive. They are not static, and should be changed frequently to reflect the emerging curriculum and the children's interests. When displays are inviting, interesting, and aesthetically pleasing, they encourage children and adults alike to enter the room, and to become involved with their work and each other.

Suggestions

- For more attractive displays, put up colored paper or burlap as background.

- When bulletin boards are not available, the teacher can:

    - Put burlap, paper, or fabric on the back of a piano, or on a shelf, wall, or chalkboard.
    - Use large empty cartons (from appliances such as television sets or refrigerators) for displaying work .
    - Use the tops of shelves to display children's structures, pegboards, clay work, etc.

- Cover a table with attractive paper or fabric to display a special project that children are working on, or have completed.

- Make sure the children's names are clearly visible on or near their own work.

- Display work at children's eye level whenever possible.

- Display work in such a way that each piece stands out. If bulletin boards are cluttered, children and adults will not know where to focus their attention.

- If teaching a double session, provide a permanent, separate space for each session's work.

- Put up representative pieces of all children's work, not only their "best" work. Be sure that each child is represented.

- Use commercial material minimally. Large posters and appropriate large, colorful pictures may be used selectively and occasionally. Most work displayed is that created by children.

Scheduling

Introduction to Suggested Schedules

Children feel comfortable and secure when following familiar routines. The following suggested daily schedules illustrate how the prekindergarten day may be planned, alternating quiet activities with more active ones, while recognizing the developmental needs of four-year-olds.

Although the day may be carefully planned, the teacher's program remains flexible, allowing for:

- unexpected occurrences, e.g., a box of pegs is scattered and needs to be picked up;
- special school activities;
- neighborhood walks or class trips.

It is important to note that specific activities are not locked into time slots. For example, large muscle development takes place many times during a day, not just at the time when it is indicated on the schedule. Mathematics and science curriculum areas are explored throughout the day in such activities as block building, circle activities, dramatic play, or use of puzzles.

Guide to Suggested Schedules

The half day schedules which follow are for 2 1/2 hours. When programs are scheduled for 3 hours teachers may extend the time frame for several of the activities.

1a **Half Day** with Lunch (morning)

1b **Half Day** with Lunch and Snack (afternoon)

2a **Full Day** - Early Lunch: 11:30a.m. - 12:15p.m., Afternoon Snack

2b **Full Day** - Late Lunch: 12:15p.m. - 1:00p.m., Morning Snack

Notes:

1. All meals and snacks are served in the classroom as part of the daily program.
2. Schedules should incorporate outdoor play every day unless weather is severly inclement.
3. As children move from one activity to another, transition time must be provided.

Schedule 1a

Prekindergarten Suggested Daily Schedule
Half Day 8:40 - 11:10 a.m. or
8:40 - 11:40 a.m.
Lunch

For three hour program, extend times for Work/Play Period and Active Play/Music/Movement/Creative Dramatics.

8:40 - 9:10	**Arrival, Greetings, Informal Conversation** Completion/continuation of work from previous day and/or work with puzzles, games, books **Class Meeting** for discussion/announcements, planning for the day, introduction of special activity (e.g., planting seeds), choice of interest area
9:10 - 9:55	**Work/Play Period** Opportunities for child-initiated work/play in interest areas, special activity. This time can be expanded as children become more experienced. Music/Movement can be incorporated into the Work/Play Period.
9:55 - 10:10	**Story Time** Expand from 10 minutes at beginning of year to 20-30 minutes.
10:10 - 10:35	**Active Play** (Indoors or outdoors) Large muscle development Use of equipment, group games **AND/OR** **Music/Movement/Creative Dramatics** (Indoors or outddoors) Movement to music, dance, rhythm band, circle activities
10:35 - 10:55	Singing songs Washing hands **Lunch** and conversation **Discussion** of day's activities and planning for next day
10:55 - 11:10	**Distribution** of work done in class/notices to bring home Greeting parents and informal conversation as children are dismissed.

Schedule 1b

Prekindergarten Suggested Daily Schedule
Half Day 12:30 - 3:00 p.m. or
12:00 - 3:00 p.m.
Lunch and Snack

For three hour program, extend times for Work/Play Period and Active Play/Music/Movement/Creative Dramatics.

12:30 - 1:05	**Arrival, Greetings** Preparation for lunch Washing hands **Lunch** and conversation **Class Meeting** for discussion/announcements, planning for the day, introduction of special activity (e.g., making get well cards or birthday cards), choice of work/play interest area
1:05 - 1:50	**Work/Play Period** Opportunities for child-initiated work/play in interest areas, special activity, completion/continuation of work from previous day. This time can be expanded as in the morning schedule.
1:50 - 2:05	**Story Time/Creative Dramatics** **Singing Songs** This time can be expanded as in the morning schedule.
2:05 - 2:30	**Active Play** (Indoors or outdoors) Large muscle development Use of equipment, group games **AND/OR** **Music/Movement/Creative Dramatics** (Indoors or outdoors) Movement to music, dance, rhythm band, circle activities
2:30 - 2:45	**Snack** and conversation (Washing hands) **Discussion** of day's activities and planning for next day
2:45 - 3:00	**Distribution** of work done in class/notices to bring home Greeting parents and informal conversation as children are dismissed.

Schedule 2a

Prekindergarten Suggested Daily Schedule
Full Day 8:40a.m. - 3:00p.m.
Early Lunch 11:30a.m. - 12:15p.m.
Snack (afternoon)

8:40 - 9:20	**Arrival, Greetings, Informal Conversation** Completion/continuation of work from previous day and/or work with puzzles, games, books **Class Meeting** for discussion/announcements, planning for the day, introduction of special activity (e.g., setting up a fish tank or terrarium), choice of work/play interest area
9:20 - 10:20	**Work/Play Period** Opportunities for child-initiated work/play in interest areas, special activity. This time may be expanded according to children's interests.
10:20 - 10:45	**Story Time/Creative Dramatics** Vary length of time with time of year.
10:45 - 11:30	**Active Play** (Indoors or outdoors) Large muscle development Use of equipment, group games
11:30 - 11:45	**Singing Songs**
11:45 - 12:15	Preparation for lunch Washing hands **Lunch** and conversation
12:15 - 12:45	**Quiet Time and Rest** Lying down and stretching out Listening to soft music, looking at books
12:45 - 1:00	**Class Meeting** to decide choice of work/play interest areas, other discussion

1:00 - 1:45	**Work/Play Period** Small group or individual work with table games and at interest areas, possible continuation of special activity
1:45 - 2:15	**Music/Movement/Creative Dramatics** (Indoors or outdoors) Movement to music, dance, rhythm band, circle activities
2:15 - 2:30	**Snack and Conversation** (Washing hands)
2:30 - 3:00	**Discussion** of day's activities and planning for next day **Distribution** of work done in class/notices to bring home Greeting parents and informal conversation as children are dismissed.

Schedule 2b

Prekindergarten Suggested Daily Schedule
Full Day 8:40a.m. - 3:00p.m.
Late Lunch 12:15p.m. - 1:00p.m.
Snack (morning)

8:40 - 9:30	**Arrival, Greetings, Informal Conversation** Completion/continuation of work from previous day and/or work with puzzles, games, books **Class Meeting** for discussion/announcements, planning for the day, introduction of special activity (e.g., making kites), choice of work/play interest area
9:30 - 10:30	**Work/Play Period** Opportunities for child-initiated work/play in interest areas, special activity. This time may be expanded according to children's interests.

10:30 - 10:50	**Snack and Conversation** (Washing hands)
10:50 - 11:20	**Story Time**
11:20 - 12:10	**Active Play** (Indoors or outdoors) Large muscle development Use of equipment, group games **AND/OR** **Music/Movement/Creative Dramatics** (Indoors or outdoors) Movement to music, dance, rhythm band, circle activities
12:10 - 12:30	**Singing Songs**
12:30 - 1:00	Preparation for lunch Washing hands **Lunch** and conversation
1:00 - 1:30	**Quiet Time and Rest** Lying down and stretching out Listening to soft music, looking at books
1:30 - 1:45	**Class Meeting** to decide choice of work/play period area, other discussion
1:45 - 2:30	**Work/Play Period** Small group or individual work with table games and at interest areas, possible continuation of special activity
2:30 - 3:00	**Discussion** of day's activities and planning for next day **Distribution** of work done in class and notices to bring home Greeting parents and informal conversation as children are dismissed.

Planning

The prekindergarten teacher's planbook is outlined in large blocks of time which parallel the daily schedule.

The planbook includes many varied activities which emerge in response to the children's interests. It is recommended that plans be prepared only one week in advance to allow for meaningful experiences related to the children's current interests. The planbook is a resource in progress, and should be flexible. Changes can be noted as they occur; original plans can be readily adapted and/or postponed.

The planbook includes plans for:

- individual, small and large group activities
- vigorous and quiet work/play activities
- indoor and outdoor activities

The following information is kept in the back of the planbook:

- trip information
- list of neighborhood resources
- list of sources for:
  - stories
  - songs
  - poems
  - finger plays
  - music
  - cooking recipes
- list of pictures for specific topics
- list of reference books/pamphlets for teachers, parents, children

Sample Planbook for one Day

WEEK BEGINNING **10-27-1986**			
Time			
Monday			
ARRIVAL GREETINGS, INFORMAL CONVERSATION 8:40 - 9:00 **Individual** or **Small Group** Greet children and parents individually Children work individually or in small groups with puzzles, games, manipulative toys, books.			

CLASS MEETING

9:00-9:10

Total Group

Discuss plan for the day.

Introduce work/play period's planned special activity: Cooking Applesauce. Recipe song. We will be cooking 8 of the apples we picked during our trip to the apple orchard. (4-6 children) Children choose their interest areas.

WORK/PLAY PERIOD

9:10-9:55

Individual and Small Groups

Opportunities for child-initiated work/play in the interest areas. The children will move freely from one area to another.

Interest Areas

Active Play (climber),
Block Area,
Art Area,
Discovery Table,
Housekeeping,
Library/Listening Center,
Sand Table,
Table Toys,
Water Table (Add leaves and apples gathered at

the orchard for experimentation), Woodworking.			
STORY TIME, CREATIVE DRAMATICS 9:55-10:10 __Small Groups__ Each adult will read aloud to 5-7 children. _Rain Makes Applesauce_ By Julian Scheer (Holiday House) _A Tree is Nice_ By Janice Udry (Harper and Row)			

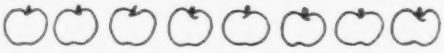
ACTIVE PLAY MUSIC/MOVEMENT (Outdoors or Inside) 10:10-10:35 Individual/ Total Group Children will respond to the beat of the drum through individual body movements: (walking, clapping, bending). Use of large muscle equipment outdoors if weather permits.			
SINGING SONGS/LUNCH 10:35-10:55 Total Group Sing: "Sing a Song of Applesauce" by JoAnne Deal Hicks			

Finger Play "Apple Tree" traditional Lunch Each child and adult will eat applesauce with lunch.			
DISCUSSION/ DISMISSAL PROCEDURES 10:55-11:10 Individual and Total Group Distribute children's work to be brought home. At this time children may wish to share their work with each other or with the whole group. (e.g., Crystal is very proud of the car she made at the			

woodwork table and shares it with the class.)			
Distribute letters about the Parent Workshop to be held next Monday.			
Prepare for dismissal.			
Dismissal			

Large picture recipe for the children and teacher to follow together.

Applesauce Recipe

1


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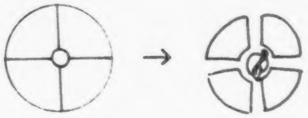

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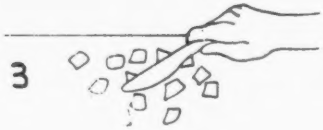

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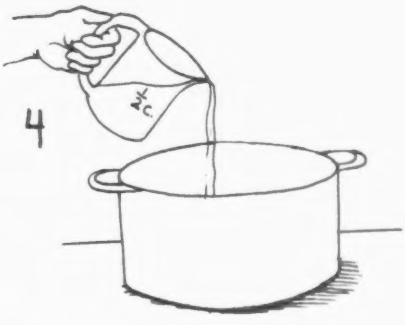

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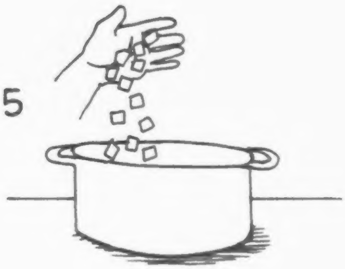

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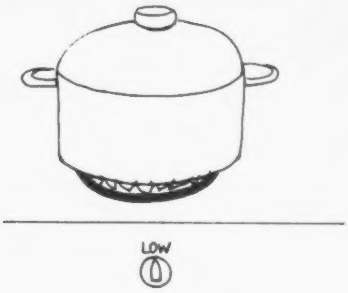

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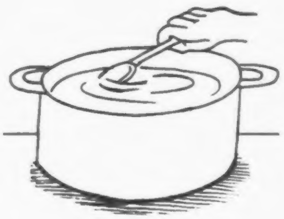

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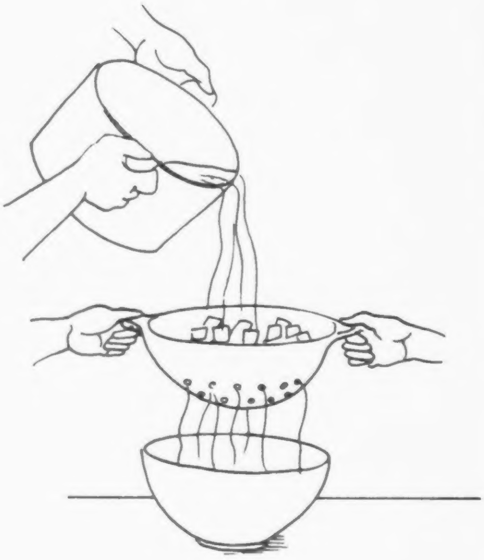

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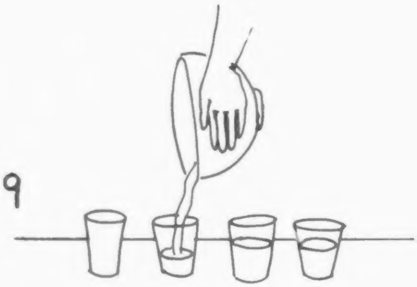


Teacher Guide to the Picture Recipe

1. Eight apples are needed to make the applesauce.

2. The teacher assists the children in coring the apples. The cores and pits are discarded.

3. The teacher and children (or one child) cut the apples into small pieces.

4. The teacher pours 1/2 cup of water into a large pot (Pyrex if available).

5. Each child has a turn placing the apple pieces into the pot.

6. The teacher (or one child) covers the pot. The teacher places the pot on a low flame.

   The apples are cooked for 8-10 minutes or until they are soft.

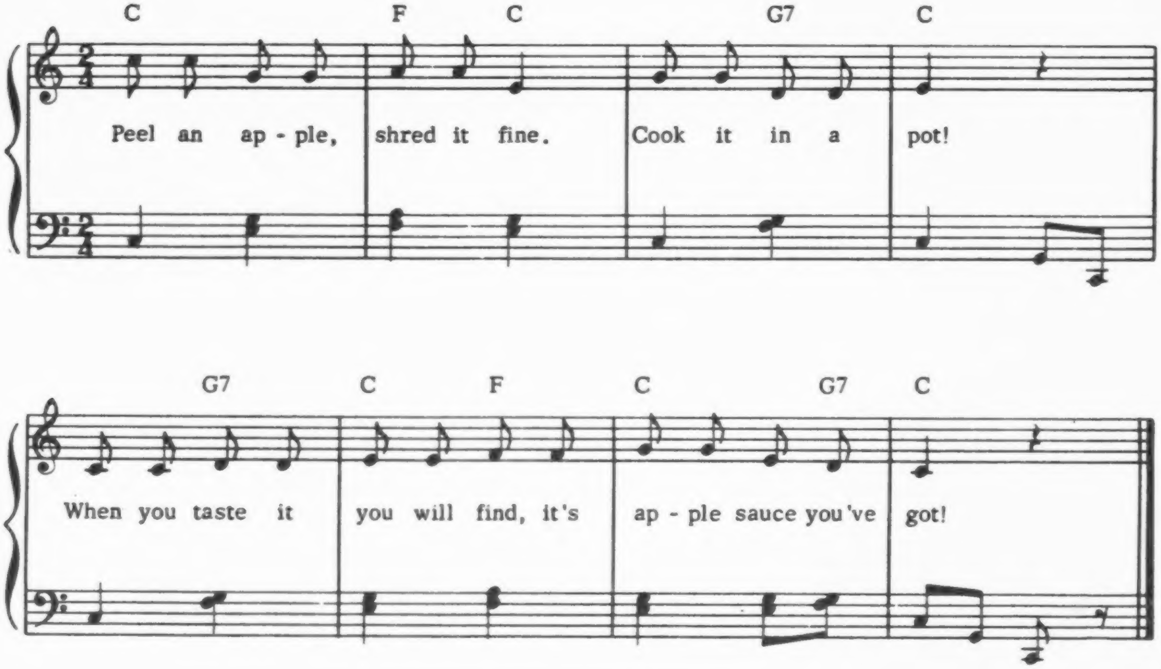
7. The teacher tests for softness with a spoon.

8. The teacher helps the children strain the applesauce to remove the tough skin, and possibly seeds and pieces of core.

9. The teacher assists the children in filling cups halfway for every child and adult in the class. Spoons and cups are placed in a special place. The applesauce will be eaten at lunchtime.

Sing A Song of Applesauce

JoAnne Deal Hicks


C F C G7 C
Peel an ap - ple, shred it fine. Cook it in a pot!
G7 C F C G7 C
When you taste it you will find, it's ap - ple sauce you've got!

"Sing a Song of Applesauce" from *Resources for Creative Teaching in Early Childhood Education* by Bonnie Mack Flemming, Darlene Softley Hamilton and JoAnne Deal Hicks, copyright ©1977 by Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc. Reprinted by permission of the publisher.

Fingerplay: Apple Tree

(Point up with one finger)	Way up high in the apple tree, Two little apples smiled at me.
(Use two arms and hands to shake imaginary tree)	I shook that tree as hard as I could,
(Make dropping motions with your hands and fingers)	And down came those apples,
(Rub your tummy.)	Mmm, they were good!

Supplies and Materials

Four-year-olds are industrious, active learners. The teacher facilitates learning by providing opportunities for exploring, manipulating, and experimenting with a variety of materials.

By observing the ways in which children use these materials, teachers learn about the children in their class and can plan activities to meet individual and group needs.

Suggestions

Provide process-oriented materials, such as:

- Art media
  - clay
  - tempera paint, finger paint
  - collage materials
- Blocks
- Large cardboard boxes that can become a house, a train, a spaceship

Use found materials, such as:

- Carpet scraps
- Wood bits
- Wallpaper scraps
- Styrofoam pieces
- Corks
- Ribbons
- Fabric
- Cardboard boxes
- Empty food, cosmetic and medicine boxes
- Cardboard rolls from toilet paper, paper towels, and aluminum foil
- Sponges cut into small shapes for printing
- Plastic meat trays from the supermarket

The list is endless. Be imaginative. Interesting things may be used in a variety of ways: wood bits might be used in a collage; cut up cardboard boxes can provide a base or background for art activities (collage, printing); plastic meat trays might hold the paint for a printing activity; empty squeeze bottles and small plastic containers can be used at the water table; children can glue different sizes of small boxes together for an art activity that explores size, shape, and space.

Send a letter home to parents early in the year asking them to save objects you need and then to bring them into the classroom.

Sample letter:

Dear Parents,

Throughout the year we use many objects you would normally throw out.

Please save the following items for us: plastic meat trays from the supermarket, plastic bottle caps, plastic squeeze bottles, small plastic bottles, yarn scraps, fabric scraps, small cardboard boxes, and cardboard rolls.

Please bring them in a bag and we'll store them in the classroom to use as needed.

Thank you!

Teacher's Signature

A note may also be sent home requesting something specific (an old area rug for the library corner or milk cartons to be cut down for planting).

Choose materials that may be used in many different ways. Encourage children to use materials creatively:

- Wash dolls from the housekeeping corner at the water table.
- Use pegs from a pegboard as money in dramatic play.
- Use teddy bears from a "Teddy Bear Bingo" game for play with table blocks.

Teachers can make games:

- Make a concentration game of the children's faces by photographing each child's face, ordering another set of prints and covering each set of prints in clear contact paper to protect the photographs and make them more durable.
- Make a shape lotto game:
  - cut 2 sets of shapes, e.g., , , , out of paper.
  - Glue one set to cardboard.
  - Cover the cardboard and the other set of shapes with clear contact paper.
  - Match shapes to play.

Materials for children's use should be arranged to promote learning, independence, and responsibility.

- Do children know where materials belong?

- How do children know where to replace materials?

  - memory?
  - matching symbols (colors, numbers, shapes, etc.) on container and shelf?
  - matching pictures of the material on shelf and container?
  - matching words printed on shelf and container?
  - outlines of blocks on shelves?

Are materials neatly arranged and spaced so that the activities presented are clear, attractive, and inviting?

- Are materials grouped by categories (e.g., hats in one place, pocketbooks in another; manipulatives in one place, dramatic play props in another)?

- Are materials placed close to areas where they are to be used (e.g., papers, scissors, glue, and crayons near a table; puzzles and manipulatives near a rug or table)?

- Are materials for children's daily use easily accessible (i.e., on low, open shelves)?

- Are teacher's materials clearly separate from children's? Are they out of sight and/or reach?

- Are children's materials that are not intended for their free use, such as more difficult puzzles and games that will be used later in the year, out of sight and/or reach?

- Are materials set out and arranged in such a way that they suggest how they are to be used (e.g., glue near paper and scissors; pegs in several small containers next to stack of peg boards; containers and tubes near the water table)?

- Are materials with many pieces stored in several separate containers so two or more children can use them at the same time without having to share (e.g., 2 or 3 baskets of Lego; 3-4 plastic containers of pegs; 2-3 bowls of beads)?

- Are there child-sized cleanup materials (sponges, mops, brooms, dustpans) placed where children can get them easily? Do children know where they are kept and how to put them back?

Prekindergarten Supplies

Manipulatives

- Beads and laces
- Pegboards and pegs
- Colored cubes
- Parquetry blocks
- Mosaics
- Duplo blocks
- Bristle blocks
- Play panels
- Unifix cubes
- Attribute blocks (large size)
- Sandpaper letters and numerals
- (Crepe, wooden) letters and numerals
- Dominoes
- 3 or 4 Lotto games
- 30 jigsaw puzzles (6-24 pieces)
- Other similar items

Art Materials

- 12 paint containers
- 18 paint brushes, different sizes
- 30 qts. tempera paint
- 12 qts. finger paints
- 36 boxes crayons, large (8 to a box)
- 12 pkgs. markers
- Pencils, large
- Chalk
- 18 scissors (blunt tipped)
- 3 scissors (lefty)
- Scissors rack
- 4 qts. paste and 4 qts. all-purpose glue
- 3-hole punch
- 100 lbs. self-hardening clay
- 6 clay boards
- 8 reams newsprint
- Rack for drying paintings
- 6 pkgs. finger paint paper
- 8 reams manila paper (9 X 12)
- 18 pkgs. construction paper (12 X 18)
- 10 smocks

Food Preparation

- Pots and mixing bowls
- Utensils
- Food for instruction
- Baking tins
- Disposable paper goods
- Graters, parers, and knives
- Spatulas, whisks, and can opener
- Sifter and egg beaters

Communication Arts

- 100 library books - minimum of 50 titles (3-4 copies of several of the books)
- 24 blank cassette tapes
- Picture file
- Pillows or cushions
- Rug or blanket

Music

- Records (24) a variety which might include:
  - Pete Seeger
  - Woody Guthrie

Tom Glazer
Oscar Brand
Burl Ives
Ellie Jenkins
Raffi

- Books containing nursery rhymes, songs, and finger plays
- 2 drums
- 12 rhythm sticks
- 3 tambourines
- 2 cymbals
- 4 bells
- 4 triangles
- 3 tone blocks

Active Play

- Ropes
- Hoops - 3 sizes
- Assorted balls
- Bean bags

Woodworking

- 2 hammers (8-ounce)
- Saw (small cross-cut)
- Hand drill and bits
- Nuts and bolts
- Blue nails
- 3 C-clamps
- Vise
- Soft wood (pine)
- 5 packages of multi-grade sand paper.

Science

- Magnifying glasses
- Thermometers
- Cages, bowls
- Planting materials
- Ropes and pulleys
- Timers
- Balance scale
- Funnels, measuring cups and spoons
- Sieves and scoops
- Graduated cups, drums
- Basters and eye droppers
- Sponges

Dramatic Play

- Dishes, pots and pans, utensils
- Brooms
- Tablecloth, mop, dustpan
- Play foods and cash register
- Telephones
- Dolls and doll clothes
- Mattresses, pillows, blankets
- Dress-up clothes, purses, belts, shoes

Block Center

Unit Blocks

Shape and Size	Number of Blocks
. Half unit	80
. Unit	180
. Double unit	90
. Quadruple unit	48
. Medium trianglar prism	32
. Large triangular prism	24
. Small cylinder	32
. Large cylinder	24
. Pillar	48
. Double pillar	48
. Ramp	48
. Ellipse	8
. Curve	8
. Large arch	8
. Roof boards	24

Hollow Blocks

Shape and Size	Number of Blocks
. Squares	24
. Double squares	12
. Half squares	12
. Half double squares	12
. Ramps	4
. Short boards	8
. Long boards	8

Note: More shapes and blocks may be added.

Block Accessories

- Zoo animals
- Farm animals
- Community figures
- Family figures
- Cars, buses, trucks
- Boats, planes
- Trains
- Miniature furniture

Prekindergarten Equipment and Furniture

Classroom

- 6 tables (24" X 36")
- 1 round table
- 20 chairs (12" high)
- Adult rocking chair
- 2 adult chairs
- Child's rocking chair
- 3 toy cabinets
- 3 block cabinets
- Double-tray cabinet
- Library display unit
- Rug or carpet
- Record player
- 4 earphones and connection
- Cassette tape recorder
- 1 or 2 easels
- Sand and water play table
- workbench
- Clothing cubbies
- File cabinet (two-drawer)
- Teachers work table (no desk)
- Rolling cart

Dramatic Play

- Chest of drawers
- Doll bed
- Vanity
- Dutch cabinet
- Stove
- Sink
- Refrigerator
- Washer-dryer
- Ironing board
- Plexiglass mirror
- Bentwood carriage

Food Preparation

- Refrigerator
- Toaster oven or convection oven
- Hot plate

Active Play

- 4 bikes
- 2 wagons
- Climber
- Learn-a-step
- Eight-foot walking board
- Full set of hollow blocks
- Set of 10 block chairs/4 boards
- 2 scooters
- Clean automobile tires
- Boards (lengths of 1' to 4') for construction

Classroom Checklist

The Room

________ Does the appearance of the room reflect a sense of functional arrangement and orderliness?

________ Is the room interesting and inviting?

________ Is the room well ventilated?

________ Is there a quiet area children may use?

________ Is furniture arranged to fit children's needs?

________ Are there open lanes to facilitate travel?

________ Can the furniture be moved easily to meet the needs of an activity (snack time, rhythms)?

________ Is there an area for group meetings?

________ Is the piano placed so that the teacher can see all of the children at one time?

________ Is there a place to put completed work?

________ Are bulletin boards current, functional, and at children's eye level?

________ Is there access to a water source, and child-sized restroom facilities?

________ Is there a place for drying paintings?

________ Does the housekeeping area have clean furniture arranged to fit children's needs?

________ Are facilities provided for convenient access to dress-up clothing?

________ Is the block area separate and adequate in size?

________ Are the blocks stored on clearly marked, easily accessible shelves?

________ Is there a cooking area equipped with adequate utensils?

Materials

________ Is material storage clear and accessible?

________ Is equipment kept clean and are broken items discarded?

________ Are there materials, such as boxes, buttons, scrap material, wood, etc., available for creative activities?

________ Does the room contain live plants and pets?

________ Is there variety in books, tapes, and records?

________ Are materials and visual aids changed often to maintain interest?

________ Does the room provide for a variety of hands-on experiences?

________ Are there cleanup materials, such as sponges, paper towels, dustpans, brushes?

________ Are there materials for dramatic play, such as shoes, pocketbooks, empty food boxes, etc.?

________ Is the dramatic play material appealing for both boys and girls?

________ Is there a variety of basic visual arts media?

________ Are there small manipulative materials to build eye-hand coordination?

________ Are there materials for musical and rhythmic experiences?

________ Is playdough, water, or sand always available?

Section 3

THE INTERACTIVE TEACHER

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THE INTERACTIVE TEACHER

For many children, the teacher is the first major caregiver outside of the family structure. Because school is a place to learn, and to learn about living with others, it should provide an environment that encourages positive developmental growth in every way.

The classroom is arranged to reflect and support the children's needs and interests, and to allow free exploration and discovery. Furniture, materials, and daily routines help determine how children will respond to their surroundings but, without question, the most influential factor of all is the teacher.

Suggested Materials for the Classroom

- blocks
- books
- animals
- growing things
- paints
- clay
- paper
- wood, hammer, nails
- water table
- sand table
- space for dramatic play
- cooking equipment
- crayons and magic markers
- scissors, paste
- puzzles and other manipulatives
- mathematics and science materials

Attractive, functional arrangement of materials allows children to interact with one another, and with the adults in the room, with a minimum of fuss. When all parts of the learning environment are designed with the children in mind, opportunities to foster positive social relationships are created as well.

The teacher works at the children's level, establishing eye contact by sitting, squatting, or kneeling down next to the child. The teacher is careful to use every opportunity to communicate the feeling that the child is an important, contributing member of the class community.

THE TEACHER OBSERVES AND LISTENS TO THE CHILDREN AT PLAY, AND PICKS UP CUES AND TOPICS THAT INTEREST CHILDREN. EXPERIENCES CAN THEN BE PROVIDED WHICH ALLOW THE CHILDREN TO DEVELOP CONCEPTS AND MAKE DISCOVERIES ABOUT THEIR WORLD.

SHANIQUA and JULIO are in the block corner.

SHANIQUA: The cavemen used to jump down on the dinosaurs and hit them on the head.

JULIO: Dinosaurs had two heads. What did the cavemen do with the other head?

SHANIQUA: No, no, dinosaurs had one head.

JULIO: I saw a picture of dinosaurs in a book. They had two heads and sometimes fire came out.

In response to the children's interest in dinosaurs, and to their need for clarification, the teacher can:

- . introduce the topic at a meeting, to elicit children's ideas and clarify their understandings.
- . display pictures of dinosaurs in the room:
  - bulletin boards
  - art center
  - library
  - science center.
- . read aloud books about dinosaurs.
- . add books about dinosaurs to the class library.
- . collect and display models of dinosaurs.
- . provide clay for sculpting dinosaurs.
- . plan a trip to a museum to see the dinosaur exhibit.
- . compare the sizes of dinosaurs with familiar objects, e.g. school bus, apartment house, man, classroom.

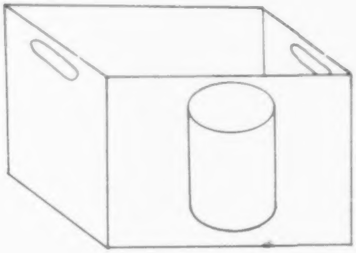
THE TEACHER PROVIDES MANY AND VARIED OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHILDREN TO LEARN.

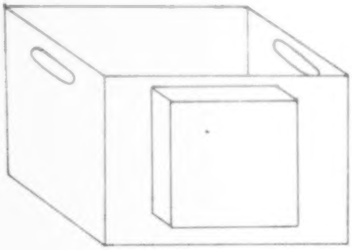
Children are encouraged to bring "junk" materials to school for:

- collages
- three-dimensional constructions
- dramatic play
- work/play activities

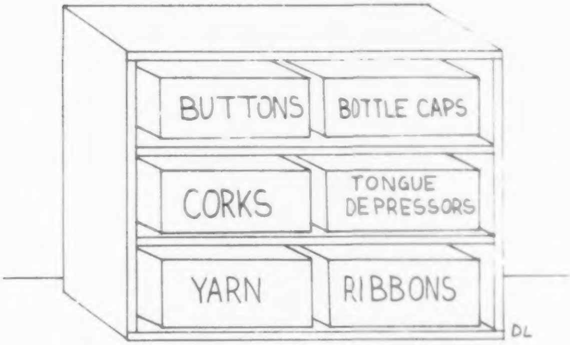
To provide storage and assist the children in learning to sort and classify, the teacher can label containers with appropriate pictures:

Milk Crates





Shoe Boxes



Because the teacher has carefully planned and structured the storage of materials, children will learn to collect, sort, and classify as part of their normal activities.

After collecting milk crates for storage of large items and small shoe boxes for small items, the teacher calls a meeting to discuss how these materials will be stored.

The teacher shows children samples of the types of containers available and the objects that will be stored, such as cereal boxes, egg cartons, toothpaste boxes, paper towel rolls, and styrofoam pieces.

TEACHER: When you bring "junk" materials to school, I want you to put the materials away in the milk crates. We have to decide which things go together because we want to put things that are similar into one crate. We have to make three groups. What shapes do you see?

DANNY: Some things are round.

EBONIE: Some things are square.

LIZZETTE: Some things are white.

PAUL: Some things can roll.

LUIS: Some of the things are flat.

LATOSHA: I see boxes.

(The teacher places three large pieces of construction paper on the floor.)

TEACHER: (Pointing to a piece of paper.) Let's put all of the things that roll on the blue paper. Can you find something that rolls? Shelby.

SHELBY: The juice can.

TEACHER: Can you find something else that rolls? Carole.

CAROLE: The yogurt cup.

TEACHER: Are there any other things that roll? Danny.

DANNY: The paper towel roll.

TEACHER: Can you find anything else that rolls? James.

JAMES: No.

TEACHER: What might we put on the red paper?

ANGELA: The cornflakes box.

TEACHER: Can you find another box? Renee.

RENEE: The egg box.

(The teacher continues in this manner until all of the objects are sorted into the correct groups.)

TEACHER: (Places all of the round and cylindrical shapes into one of the crates.) What can we put on a sign to mark this crate so we will remember to put only things that roll and are round into this milk crate?

EBONIE: You can draw a picture of a juice can.

JUAN: We can draw a paper towel roll.

TIFFANY: Draw a yogurt cup.

The teacher continues in this manner, eliciting from the children how to label the remaining two crates.

The next day, the teacher will ask the children how they can store and label storage containers that will be used to house buttons, ribbons, string, bottle tops, corks, bits of wrapping paper, etc.

THE TEACHER SETS A POSITIVE SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL CLIMATE IN VARIOUS WAYS.

. By greeting each child by name upon arrival.

  - In many schools the parent brings the child directly to the classroom. The child greets and is greeted by teacher or paraprofessional. After a short conversation the child, with assistance if needed, puts clothing into a cubby and is helped to choose an activity (such as a book, game, or puzzle) to use until all the children arrive.

. By encouraging positive social relationships among children.

. By speaking in a soft voice.

. By making children aware of the plan for the day.

  - When most of the children have arrived, the teacher calls them together for a brief planning meeting to discuss the schedule for the day. It will include daily routines, as well as any special activities planned for that day. At the end of this short meeting, children start their work/play period.

. By using a positive approach in setting limits for classroom behavior.

  - Positive reinforcement helps the teacher to focus attention on children's desirable behavior and ignore negative behavior. Each time a child displays positive behavior, the teacher reinforces it with a word of praise, a hug, or a smile.

  - Room arrangement helps children to become self-directed, develop confidence, and feel good about themselves.

  - Children need to know what is allowed in the classroom. They need to know that they will not be allowed to hurt themselves, others, or animals, or to damage equipment.

. By helping each child to be an important part of the classroom community.

THE TEACHER INTERACTS WITH CHILDREN WHO ARE ENGAGED IN VERBAL AND NONVERBAL ACTIVITIES.

Richard is struggling to dress a doll in clothing that is much too small for it. After observing Richard for several minutes, the teacher sits next to him.

TEACHER: What's happening, Richard?

RICHARD: I can't put the dress over the doll's head.

TEACHER: Why can't you?

RICHARD: I'm not pulling hard enough.

TEACHER: Let's hold the dress in front of the doll, and look at the doll and the dress.

RICHARD: Oh! The dress is too small.

TEACHER: What do you think you can do?

Richard looks at the doll bed where a smaller doll is resting, walks over, picks up the doll and puts the dress on it with ease. He looks at the teacher.

RICHARD: I'm going to play with this doll now.

****

Afiya is having a difficult time saying goodby to her mother. After helping Afiya to put her coat away, the teacher suggests that Afiya and her mother go to the library corner and share a book.

After a while, Afiya replaces the book on the shelf and walks with her mother to the door. They kiss and say goodby. The teacher joins them, gently takes Afiya by the hand, and leads her to a table. The teacher then sits with Afiya while she builds with one-inch cubes.

****

It is important to closely examine and reflect upon the teacher's role in the lives of young children. The responsive teacher creates a climate for positive interaction and mutual trust. The sensitive teacher observes the chidren, listens to them at work and play, and attempts to meet their needs.

The interactive teacher:

. understands that all children are individuals at different stages on the developmental continuum.
. provides many opportunities for children to experience success.
. respects children and values what they say and what they do.

Section 4
WORKING TOGETHER

Safety

WORKING TOGETHER

The Prekindergarten Team

The Classroom Team

- Teacher
- Educational Assistant (paraprofessional)
- Social Worker/Family Assistant
- School Support Staff

The prekindergarten team consists of responsible, responsive adults who work together to care for children. Team members work closely with parents and caregivers, since four-year-old children are still dependent upon their families for security, identity, and a sense of well-being. The extended group then joins together to assure that the home and the classroom are places where each child can learn and grow.

Working with fours is fun. It is also a learning process for all concerned. The prekindergarten team understands that four-year-olds learn best through play in an informal environment. The teacher and assistant discuss those adult behaviors which recognize and encourage each child's individuality and their implementation in the classroom:

- sitting, squatting, or stooping down to a child's eye level when speaking face to face.
- demonstrating care by patting children on the shoulders.
- listening attentively as children speak.
- encouraging children to grow in independence and self-reliance.
- speaking clearly and slowly so that children can understand.
- accepting children's emotions and modeling appropriate emotional expression.
- guiding children's behavior with positive reinforcement.

The teacher and paraprofessional participate in daily and long-range planning. They work together to prepare materials and exchange ideas for class activities. Specific examples include:

- planning to make a collage about the color yellow and preparing materials in trays for children to use.

- planning for children to make soap bubbles at the water table and setting up liquid detergent, aprons, plastic rings, and straws in the interest area.

- talking about Kim's birthday and ways in which the children will celebrate this event.

- discussing a planned trip to the zoo and activities to introduce children to the animals they will see.

- gathering utensils and preparing food for a cooking activity.

It is important that the members of the team meet regularly to talk about their concerns, the needs of the parents and children, and the overall development of the prekindergarten program. The teacher and paraprofessional may use a portion of the day allocated each month to home visits and training, to plan together and interact as a team. The teacher may also wish to discuss program needs with the staff during daily preparation periods.

The teacher and the paraprofessional interact in many ways during the school day. Their involvement with the children, as well as responsibility for routines and activities, are shared.

The Teacher	While the Paraprofessional
Cooks applesauce with a few children.	Walks around the room assisting children in the other interest areas.
Reads to a group of children.	Reads to another group of children.
Converses with a parent at arrival time.	Helps children hang up clothing and select books or table toys.
Announces a meeting time.	Encourages children to replace materials and get ready for the meeting.
Works with children in setting the table for lunch.	Brings lunch to classroom from lunchroom area.
Teaches a simple nursery rhyme.	Joins with the children in reciting the verse.
Leads the children on a neighborhood walk.	Follows the group closely, attending to one or two children as needed.
Walks around room assisting children in interest areas.	Makes dough for cookies with 3-4 children.
Talks to the children about a trip to the firehouse.	Prepares name tags which children will wear on the trip.

The Paraprofessional

The teacher recognizes that the paraprofessional brings personal strengths and talents to the program. Opportunities are provided to use these skills with the children when the paraprofessional:

- participates in preservice and inservice staff development activities.
- assists individual or small groups of children with the day's planned activities.
- alerts the teacher to special needs of individual children.
- helps with classroom routines: arrival, snack, cleanup, lunch, toileting, dismissal.
- gives aid and encouragement to children with limited English proficiency.
- assists with necessary clerical work, collects trip slips and absence notes.
- accompanies the class on trips.
- helps organize materials and maintain classroom arrangements.
- prepares materials and displays for classroom and children's use.
- guides children to manipulate and use instructional equipment.
- listens to children as they speak and encourages interaction and conversation among them.
- plays games with a small group of children.
- reads stories to children.
- comforts children at special times.
- watches out for safety hazards and spills in the classroom.
- helps children develop good health practices, e.g., washing hands before eating and after toileting.
- accompanies teacher and family assistant on home visits.
- utilizes own special talents and abilities with the children.
- encourages good eating habits by eating with the children at lunch or snack time in the classroom.

The Social Worker/Family Assistant

The social worker and/or family assistant build and reinforce home-school relations through continuous communication between parents and staff. Duties and responsibilities of the social worker include:

- observations of children in school, interviews with parents and children in school or home, staff consultations, and interdisciplinary conferences.
- participation in individual and team conferences within school (ancillary and teaching staff) to share knowledge of the children and to coordinate and facilitate use of skills and resources in serving children and families.

- participation in behavioral/academic assessment programs and providing help to teaching teams in developing skills to do the same.
- treatment of children referred for help, either directly, through casework to child and parent, or indirectly, through assistance to staff or referral to the appropriate community agency.
- working with parents in small groups and general parent education meetings to help them strengthen their children's growth and development.
- training and supervision of family assistants in social work skills through conferences, workshops, and field trips to community agencies.
- assisting parents in obtaining the services of health and social service agencies.

The family assistant's duties and responsibilities are similar to those of the social worker. This member of the prekindergarten team:

- attends preservice and inservice staff development activities at the school, district, central level.
- helps recruit eligible children for the program.
- sets up and maintains the Parents' Area.
- visits parents at home.
- helps to identify special family needs.
- talks with parents about their concerns.
- confers with teacher and paraprofessional about parent/family needs.
- plans and conducts workshops and meetings for parents, and maintains a schedule of parents' meetings and home visits.
- sets up and maintains a lending library of relevant publications for parents' use; arranges celebrations for parents on special days; demonstrates and teaches crafts and sewing techniques to parents.
- assists in classroom at special times.
- encourages parents to volunteer their help in the classroom, and to attend scheduled conferences, meetings, and other school functions.
- shares with parents positive aspects of child's growth and adjustment to school.
- follows up immediately on school absences and helps identify those problems which make a child's attendance difficult.
- encourages parents to attend to children's dental and physical examinations.
- maintains record of daily activities.
- maintains liaison with health and social service agencies and accompanies parents to agencies as needed.
- interprets community and neighborhood conditions to newly assigned members of school staff.

Other School Support Personnel

The **lunchroom staff** prepares nutritious food for the children. Lunch is served on individual trays or family style, and is wheeled into the classroom on a cart. The teacher discusses the menu for the day with the children and asks for suggestions about foods that they would enjoy eating for lunch or snack. When feasible, the lunchroom staff can prepare some of the foods suggested by the children.

When the lunchroom has surplus or leftover foods, the prekindergarten teacher might request them for snack time, or to be used in cooking activities in the classroom.

A trip to the lunchroom is exciting for four-year-olds. The children meet the members of the lunchroom staff and find out about the way food is prepared at school.

The **school nurse** and **health aide** are concerned with maintaining children's good health. They advise parents of available community health services, arrange for dental care, schedule special medical screenings, and provide space to isolate a child who is ill. The health aide works directly with the children and regularly checks their height, weight, and vision. When screening is completed, the health aide is responsible for entering all pertinent information on the children's record cards.

The prekindergarten team works and plans together for long-term, short-term, and daily activities. Respect, cooperation, and sharing among adults are the keystones of a successful program.

Staff Development

Just as we make careful plans for the growth and development of young children in the prekindergarten classes, so too must we consider what support can be extended to the staff in their professional growth and development. We know that adult learners differ in important ways. Personal learning style, years of experience, and training all contribute to their needs, but there are particular aspects of the prekindergarten teacher's role which make the staff development component crucial:

- Teaching prekindergarten children is emotionally and physically demanding. Prekindergarten staff, when asked to describe their work, often use the phrase "always on!" While one goal of the prekindergarten program is to foster independence, young children are clearly not expected to have mastered this life skill. Teachers and paraprofessionals need a change of pace, a chance to function on a professional level with their peers.

- Curriculum for the prekindergarten is primarily child-centered. Since young children cannot learn from workbooks, textbooks, or formally structured whole group lessons, the prekindergarten teacher's reliance on specific formulas and lesson plans is minimal. This places great emphasis on the adult's role as communicator and facilitator.

- The role of the prekindergarten teaching staff is an intellectually demanding one. They need to understand children in this age group from a variety of perspectives, including physiological development, emotional characteristics, social growth, patterns of language acquisition, family and societal influences. They are also expected to keep current in the areas of learning theory, curricular needs, and child development research. Each of the many decisions and long-term plans a teacher makes reflects judgments based on a great store of knowledge and a wide variety of understandings.

- There is often only one prekindergarten in a school building. Even when there are health, social services, and parent involvement specialists working with the prekindergarten program, there exists a real potential for the teacher and the paraprofessional to become isolated. Links with other prekindergarten staff members and early childhood educators help support personal and professional renewal and growth, and prevent "burnout."

Regularly scheduled weekly staff development sessions are formally built into every prekindergarten program. These sessions are a vital adjunct to contracted preparation periods. It is also recommended that one day per month be devoted to the professional development of all staff and that children be excused from school for the day.

As all good education takes into account the developmental level of the child, so the staff development process must recognize that teachers and paraprofessionals are at different stages in their professional growth.

In the beginning stages of their professional careers, the teaching staff will find training specifically directed toward addressing immediate classroom issues most helpful. This often takes the form of "make and take" workshops, or the introduction to new techniques and materials. As staff members grow and develop in their profession, their interests become wider. Training techniques can include features more relevant to their needs, such as videotape, active participation in conferences and seminars, and demonstration and dissemination of master teaching techniques.

The person designated as Staff Developer, most often a teacher at an advanced stage of professional development, must be given the time and the resources to fulfill this important function. Staff development is not a response to a specific need, nor is it a temporary change technique. It is an ongoing commitment to professional growth and, as such, it is a shared responsibility. Teachers at different levels of development will find themselves assuming various roles within each form: organizer, leader, participant. The following are some suggested forms of staff development:

- *Interclass visitations*. Wonderful things are happening in your room and the one next door. *Share them*. *Talk about them*. This is one of the richest, least expensive, most underutilized forms of staff development. It is not only a wonderful source of new ideas for the observer, but also a potent opportunity for staff members to begin to share insights and values about their teaching. Time for discussion of observations should be built into these sessions to insure that they are not perceived as criticisms or judgments.

- *Long-term study*. Choose an important area and look at it from a variety of perspectives over an extended period of time. An example of a topic which might appeal to the prekindergarten staff, and which could be studied over a long period of time, is "Understanding the separation process and helping parents deal with this issue."

The group, including teachers, paraprofessionals, social workers, and family assistants, might choose to look at this issue by:

  - recalling their own feelings and memories of separating from their parents and going to school.

  - recalling their own feelings when, as parents, their children left home and were entrusted to the care of a new adult.

- observing and classifying various types of parental separation behavior.

- inviting a child development expert to address the group about separation issues.

- watching a film together on separation in other cultures, for example, Margaret Mead's films on Samoa.

- considering death as an issue of separation for four-year-olds.

- reflecting on separation and divorce as an issue.

Other topics which warrant intensive and long-term study by teachers of prekindergarten children include:

- early art work and the process of symbolization.

- language acquisition and the young child.

- the prekindergarten child in the continuum of the school experience.

- nonsexist education and the young child.

- the study of one child over time, including observational records, collection of the child's work, and other data.

- one curriculum area.

There are issues that come up during the course of the year that call for the attention of the whole staff. For example, some time in the fall, prekindergartens have an Open School evening, where parents are invited to join the teachers in their classrooms and find out about goals and expectations for the year. Preparation for this event is an ideal time for more experienced teachers to share their previous successes and experiences (preservice teacher education seldom prepares a new teacher for this important part of the teaching experience); for teachers with some experience to consolidate and refine their thinking about parent communication; and for new teachers to gain support, information, and techniques from their more experienced colleagues.

- The staff review of a child. Bringing the focus of the staff development process to bear on children is always appropriate and of value to staff at all levels of professional development. It can be used by large staff groups, small groups, and even individual class teams. Its benefits go beyond specific recommendations for individual children. It centers attention on issues of child development which will positively affect teaching. Additional discussion of the staff review can be found in the Recordkeeping section of this book.

John Dewey, in describing the goal of the professional educator, speaks of becoming a "student of teaching." This process is an ongoing one and takes many forms:

- observing
- recording
- analyzing
- listening
- sharing
- reading
- demonstrating

Teachers must improve their teaching skills or they will lose them. It is only through a carefully planned, continuous program of staff development that the prekindergarten staff will provide ever more sensitive, stimulating, warm, and creative environments for young children.

Guide for the Administrator

For young children, a quality early childhood program is of great importance in establishing the foundation for life-long learning. The prekindergarten experience, in particular, is designed to encourage and further develop the natural spontaneous curiosity that young children possess. Very often, the young child sees possibilities that are not readily apparent to the adult observer, and actively seeks to order the environment, as well as to organize the patterns of association that lead to further knowledge. The classroom setting is crucial, and the adult role is pivotal, as determinants in developing the attitudes of confidence, independence, competence, and productivity that are essential to achievement in later years.

For the supervisor, the quality of the prekindergarten classroom setting is essential to the success of the program. It is a carefully organized and stimulating environment that is rich in materials for the young child to explore and manipulate. The room arrangement is conducive to interaction between young children and encourages talking, exploring, and sharing. It is recommended that the supervisor of the prekindergarten visit the classroom when the children are not present and use the following questions for assessment:

- **Does the room provide adequate space for the program?**

  In the prekindergarten, there is enough space for young children to feel comfortable as they move freely around the room. Classrooms are large, clean, pleasant, attractive, and equipped with bathrooms and sinks, as well as storage space for classroom materials.

- **Is there a large, accessible outdoor/indoor play area?**

  Young children constantly seek to develop control of themselves and of their environment, as demonstrated by their excitement at mastering basic tasks such as running, hopping, skipping, riding a tricycle, throwing and catching a ball. The prekindergarten schedule includes attention to both carefully planned and spontaneous activities which allow children to explore, organize, and sequence physical actions in an appropriate environment.

- **Is the classroom furniture appropriate for young children?**

  In the prekindergarten, tables are arranged to encourage socialization and chairs are sized to allow children to sit comfortably with their feet on the floor. Materials are placed in cabinets that the children can reach easily. In addition, there is an area provided where children may rest if they feel tired or sick.

- **Is there enough classroom equipment in good repair to support a variety of learning activities?**

  In the prekindergarten, structured play which involves interaction with other children and the environment motivates the need and capacity to learn that young children possess. Appropriate equipment to support activities in creative media, block play, dramatic play, storytelling, music, and food preparation is part of the prekindergarten classroom. Manipulative puzzles and games are integral materials as well.

- **Is the room decorated with examples of children's work?**

  Young children develop self-confidence when their accomplishments are given recognition. Displays of children's work encourage conversation and stimulate further productivity. Careful examination of the work indicates that different types of activities take place in the prekindergarten.

The answers to the above questions will indicate the level at which the program may be expected to function. Each answer should be evaluated in terms of its relationship to providing a fruitful prekindergarten experience.

Having observed the classroom setting in isolation, the next step is to focus on the program in operation. Young children need support from adults who are aware of the special characteristics of learning in early childhood, and who are able to translate this knowledge into practice. In the prekindergarten, the supervisor expects to see positive interaction and active involvement between children and adults. To determine the extent to which this is taking place, the following questions may be useful:

- **Is the adult/child ratio sufficient to support an informal learning environment?**

  Young children enjoy sharing their experiences and working together in small groups. In the prekindergarten, adults are readily available to children as they listen patiently and encourage questions. When needed, appropriate and motivating answers are provided.

- **Are the activities offered interesting and appropriate?**

  In the prekindergarten, all children are busy and involved with tasks that can be completed without too much direction or outside assistance. Hands-on materials are available for use; sharing and taking turns is encouraged. Adults carefully monitor activities and maintain records of children's participation.

- **Do the children and adults cooperate with each other?**

  In the prekindergarten, adults establish appropriate rules and flexible routines. Specific classroom responsibilities are assigned to the children, and assistance is provided as needed. Atypical behavior is handled in a calm, firm, positive manner. Attention is given to the need for understanding and evaluation of each child both as an individual and a group member.

- **Is there evidence of adult collaboration in planning program activities based on children's strengths and interests?**

  The prekindergarten team, consisting of classroom teacher and support staff, shares information about the children to assist in providing activities which promote children's learning. Records of child observations, home contacts, parent interviews, and other pertinent data are sources of information.

- **How varied is the daily schedule?**

  In the prekindergarten, the daily schedule includes active and quiet play times, storytelling, music, singing, and outside play. Nutritious meals and snacks are provided as part of the program. Children are involved in preparation activities and are encouraged to socialize and make conversation during mealtime.

- **Is there evidence of parental involvement?**

  In the prekindergarten, parent education is a priority. Parents participate in classroom activities, as well as in workshops on child development and parenting skills.

Careful attention to the answers will provide a comprehensive assessment of the program that will assist the supervisor of the prekindergarten in directing staff training and parent education.

The primary task in the prekindergarten is to combine skills and resources to provide education that is relevant to the unique learning modes of young children. Clearly, the early childhood supervisor's role in the prekindergarten is one of focus and guidance. A quality program for young children exists in an appropriate environment staffed with well trained teachers, who incorporate the fundamentals of child development into their planning.

Section 5

THE EMERGING CURRICULUM

THE EMERGING CURRICULUM

Introduction

The key to an emerging curriculum is a teacher who believes in the strength and variety of children's self-initiated learning. It is in a child-centered classroom that responsiveness to children's needs is likely to flourish. A child-centered classroom differs from a teacher-directed class in that materials, questions, and activities introduced by the teacher are predominantly open-ended. There are many possible answers to a question and many ways of making something. Materials lend themselves to a variety of ideas, products, and uses. Four-year-olds come to prekindergarten with myriad interests and questions, and tremendous energy for learning. The teacher provides an environment which nurtures this natural energy. Careful listening and responding enables the teacher to stretch and extend the concepts and thinking of the child.

Within the emerging curriculum, teachers' words demonstrate a belief in the child's place in the development of learning.

- Tami, you found out that if you nail two pieces of wood together with one nail the pieces turn, but if you use two nails the pieces don't turn.
- William, I have watched you work very hard with blocks this morning. Tell me about your work.
- When I look at your painting, Sonia, I see that you used two different sized paint brushes. See the strokes?
- When I was coming to school this morning, I saw something that made me think spring was coming. What might make you think that spring is coming?

Young children's learning is not bound by discrete, adult-defined subject areas. Within each activity or time period, many things are being learned - all at once and all together.

One concept that all prekindergarten learning experiences have in common is symbolic functioning. At its most basic level, symbolic functioning means understanding that "something can stand for something else." This is the underpinning of most, if not all, of the child's later academic learning. Success in reading, mathematics, writing, social studies, and art are all dependent on a deep and pervasive understanding of that seemingly simple but very complex idea. Young children will best learn about symbols by experiencing them throughout their school day:

- A block with wheels stands for a sanitation truck.
- A teacher-drawn recipe tells the cook to measure three cups of water for the applesauce.
- A picture in a book symbolizes a hungry caterpillar.
- A large climber on the playground becomes a castle.
- A child becomes a police officer when the symbol - an officer's hat - is donned.

The emerging curriculum provides materials, experiences, and opportunities for children's growth on many different levels of symbolic functioning.

Approaching Literacy

The prekindergarten classroom encourages a positive attitude toward literacy in its physical, affective, and cognitive climates:

PHYSICAL

- signs
- labels for areas of interest
- name cards for animal homes
- children's name tags
- posters
- pictures
- books
- magazines
- alphabet letters
- charts
- bulletin boards
- writing tools

AFFECTIVE

- sharing experiences
- having discussions
- interacting
- feeling comfortable
- taking risks
- asking questions
- making discoveries
- exploring new materials
- answering questions
- expressing ideas

LEARNING TO COMMUNICATE

COGNITIVE

- looking at books
- playing games
- reciting rhymes
- singing songs
- matching letters
- dictating stories
- developing concepts
- sequencing events
- engaging in dramatic play
- listening to stories and poems
- looking at pictures
- beginning to write

Young children initially learn language at home through informal experiences with friends and family. During their early years, children learn to speak, to understand the words spoken to them, and to develop concepts related to their needs. Television provides youngsters with further information through print, symbol, and picture cues. Records, cassettes, and storybooks shared at home offer early literary appreciations. Everything that is learned depends in some way on the use of language. Although most children approximate the same stages of development in acquiring facility with language, they proceed at individual rates. The teacher accepts each child's language ability and builds upon it. Children whose home environment is language-poor may need additional experiences and time to communicate with ease.

Young children learn in natural and spontaneous ways. They observe, imitate, explore, predict, take risks, pace their own activities and, through it all, attempt to make sense of their world. Prekindergarten children bring to school a disposition to learn. They also bring knowledge and skills which can be further developed through carefully planned activities and experiences.

Oral communication - listening and speaking - plays an important part in the daily schedule. When children listen to stories, enjoy the Library/Listening Center, or borrow books from the Lending Library, they are participating in the literate climate of the classroom. The prekindergarten teacher expands upon that environment by stimulating discussion, encouraging listening skills, modeling good language use, answering children's questions, listening to children as they speak, and responding to their natural curiosity.

Language

One of the primary tasks of four-year-olds is to define who they are in relation to the world around them.

Language helps children find their place in the world by:

- allowing them to have an impact on their environment (people, events, and objects).
- providing opportunities for them to consider new possibilities, to vicariously experience the unfamiliar, and to create alternative ways of viewing their world.
- opening up new areas for exploration and clarification.
- providing the words children need to make sense of our complex symbol systems (reading and writing).

The development of communication skills is a primary goal of every prekindergarten program. The richer and more varied the experiences in the classroom, the more children's communication skills will be strengthened and their language enriched.

Language development cannot be separated from the rest of the prekindergarten curriculum. It is the filter through which the child's learning is focused and sharpened, and the foundation upon which each new understanding is built.

Ask Yourself

1. **Is the noise level low enough so that people can comfortably hear one another?** The prekindergarten classroom should be busy and humming, but not so loud that people have to struggle to make themselves heard.

2. **Are all the children's words and ideas valued?** Language is a relatively new skill for four-year-olds, and they are not always able to make their ideas clear. Adults need to convey the message that the content of the children's language is important. At times you might want to say: "I am having trouble understanding what you are telling me, Tamieka. Please say it in a different way" or "What you are telling me is important, Raul. Come over to the book corner where it will be easier for me to concentrate on what you are saying."

3. **Is the power of words understood and demonstrated?** Words can hurt and heal; soothe, control, and clarify. Teachers can help children understand this by telling them: "Amy, tell us what your idea is for the block building" or "Joey, you are very angry. Use words to say what is making you mad."

4. **Are words used and experienced for pleasure?** Four-year-olds savor the words and sounds of their own spontaneous speech as well as in teacher-initiated activities rhymes, songs, and literature. Reading Goodnight, Moon or any Doctor Seuss tale can be a rich sensory experience.

5. **Do I consciously include new words into my speech to help the children expand their vocabulary? Am I aware of modeling correct syntax and structure?**

Early Writing

Children come to school having had many experiences with writing. They scribble on:

- walls
- paper bags
- insides of books
- newspapers
- drawing pads
- windowpanes
- sand at the beach

Perhaps the earliest writing is done sitting in the high chair, when the baby turns the bowl of cereal over and begins to "draw" with open hands. As with oral language, all children are predisposed to "write." Children will want to write in nurturing environments that:

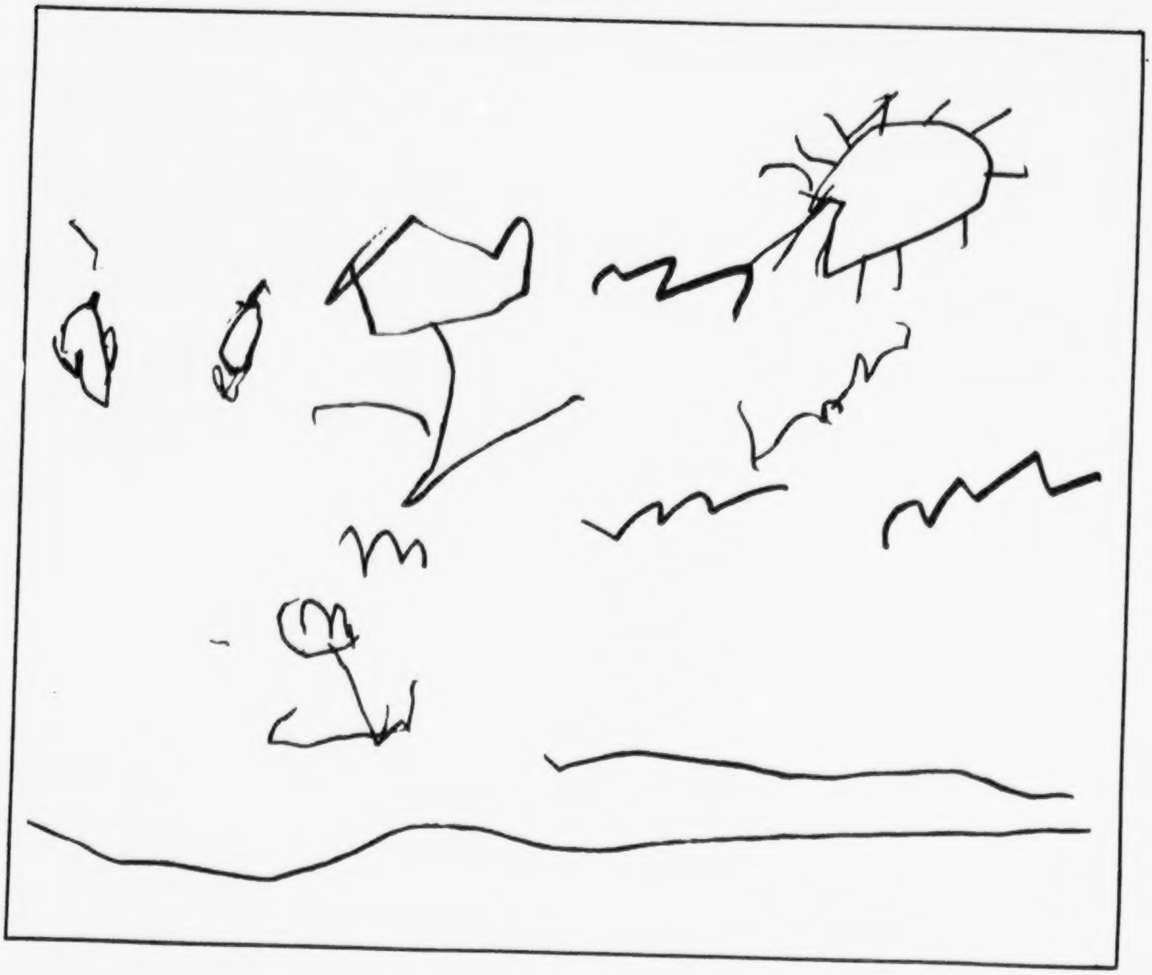
- contain people who will engage children in talk, and treat them like competent language partners.
- contain people who will respond to their meaning without regard to form.
- provide for and encourage drawing and scribbling.
- allow children time to make sense of how language works.
- contain people who write.
- contain people who understand that the writing process starts long before children are ready for pencil and paper.

The teacher structures the classroom to include experiences that provide opportunities to spark and support the writing process. Some of these experiences are:

- oral language
- reading to children every day
- trips
- block building
- play at sand and water tables
- dramatic play
- observations of and interactions with living things
- cooking
- playing with clay, playdough, and finger paints
- painting at the easel

Tools and materials that provide writing opportunities:

- paints - tempera and finger
- brushes
- crayons, magic markers, primary pencils
- paper
  - newsprint
  - finger paint paper
  - drawing paper
  - unlined writing paper (many sizes and shapes)



Note: Materials for writing and drawing are placed in various locations throughout the room, e.g., Block Area, Library/Listening Center, Art Area. Attention is given to how these materials are stored. Pencils, crayons, and magic markers are placed in containers that are clearly marked, each with a special place that is accessible to the children. Papers are sorted and stored according to kind, size, and shape. Adequate table and floor space is planned, so that children can choose to write, paint, or draw throughout the day. Children need to know that there are specific, permanent places for work with finger paints, tempera paints, and clay.

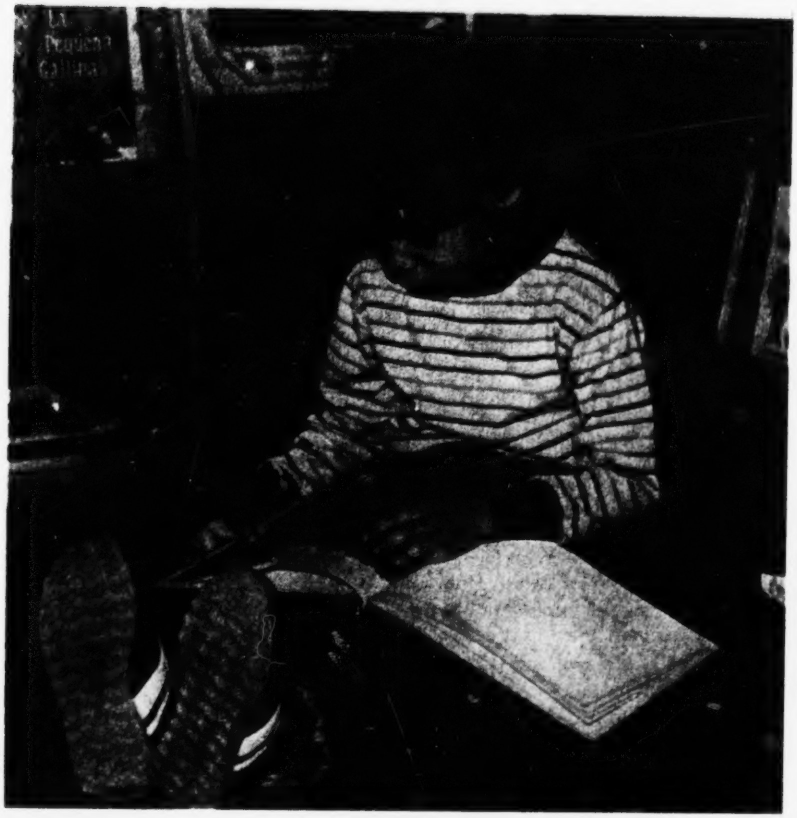
Picture Books in Winter

Robert Louis Stevenson

All the pretty things put by,
Wait upon the children's eye,
Sheep and shepherds, trees and crooks,
In the picture story-books.

We may see how all things are,
Seas and cities, near and far,
And the flying fairies' looks,
In the picture story-books.

How am I to sing your praise,
Happy chimney-corner days,
Sitting safe in nursery nooks,
Reading picture story-books?



Read Aloud

I like to read a book
But I love to have them read,
To hear my parent's rhythmic voice
When I am tucked in bed,
Or when I'm in the bathtub
Or sitting in a chair
Or riding in a car
Or in the salt sea air.

I just love being read to
Anytime and anywhere
Because the books we read
Become the memories we share.

M. Scheidet
Children's Librarian
Shoreham-Wading River
Public Library

The single most important activity for building the knowledge required for eventual success in reading is reading aloud to children.

The abundance and variety of children's literature available today makes reading aloud an exciting experience for the prekindergarten. Children who are read to early in life gain the security and confidence to love books, understand book language, and prepare for formal reading instruction. What better way is there to introduce children to literature than through the magic of Cinderella, the excitement of The Three Bears, the rhymes of Mother Goose, the antics of Curious George, or the wonder of picture books?

Children enjoy the sounds of words. Poetry is especially valuable in the prekindergarten because of its rhyme schemes and repetition. Onomatopoeic words (swish, boom, bang, tick-tock, rrrrrrrr, whoosh) appeal to young ears. Reading stories and poems to children expands their language and builds their concepts. It encourages them to fantasize about worlds they have not yet visited, and to remember familiar experiences. Books capture young imaginations and offer stimuli for role-playing and creative dramatics in the prekindergarten class.

Tips for Reading Aloud

- Select storybooks with large and colorful pictures.
- Select stories which relate to children's interests.
- Select stories which meet the children's level of comprehension.
- Select stories to meet the children's attention span.
- Select stories with action and repetitive language.
- Select stories you like to read.
- Read the story before presenting it to the children.
- Practice reading the story aloud with variations of tone and stress.
- After the book has been read, place it where the children may "reread" it, or look at the pictures.
- Display the books in the interest areas they relate to.

Four-year-olds enjoy stories about children, toys, families, pets, animals, and the circus. Books which relate to themes, holidays, special events, seasons, and school are other good choices. Children enjoy fairy tales and picture books. It is a good idea to read a story to the children at a designated time each day, e.g., before lunch or dismissal.

Do not expect all the children to join the story circle. Sometimes the educational assistant reads to one group of children, while the teacher reads to the other. Or a story can be shared by one or two children and an adult. Whenever reading is done, gather the children close by in a warm and confident manner. Be sure that all the children can see the book and its illustrations. Interruptions which relate to the story are acceptable. Children are encouraged to participate by chorusing familiar words or repetitive phrases.

After the story has been read, the children might like to talk about it. The teacher responds to their questions and develops their ideas.

Teacher: Curious George got into a lot of trouble.
Child: He was bad.
Child: He got lost.
Child: He ate too much candy.
Child: The man got angry.
Child: He fell down and got hurt.
Teacher: Why do you think Curious George had so much trouble?
Child: He didn't listen.
Child: He ran away.
Child: He bothered everything.
Teacher: Did anything like what happened to Curious George in today's story ever happen to you?

Miquel
Felix
Dennis

Children like to hear their favorite stories over and over again. Repetition helps them:

- focus on different aspects of the story
- become more familiar with story events
- identify with storybook characters
- predict what will come next
- talk about stories
- gain better understanding of story parts
- put story events in order
- increase their range of responses
- assimilate new vocabulary
- make connections between the story and their own experiences

Teachers who read stories to young children stimulate early literacy, give children a sense of story, and help them to an early appreciation for reading. Children become literate as they enjoy books, retell, and "reread" their favorites.

Read to the children.

Read a variety of books.

Read a story every day.

Read the stories over and over again.

Let the children "read" the books that are read to them.

Storytelling Without Books

Young children enjoy listening to stories. Storytelling is a valuable technique for exciting their imaginations and introducing good literature. Children can be enchanted when stories are told without books.

Storytelling allows the teacher to:

- communicate directly with the children
- gesture to enhance the story
- personalize the story
- use the language of literature in an informal way
- focus on the listeners
- invite children to respond
- expand children's story awareness

Storytelling allows children to:

- develop listening skills
- feel close to the storyteller
- become directly involved in the story
- imagine story scenes and events
- participate in the narration
- become aware of story structure
- hear story language

It is important to establish criteria for selecting stories for storytelling. The teacher should consider whether the story:

- is short enough to maintain children's interest
- has a well-structured plot
- provides clearly delineated characters
- contains dialogue
- reflects children's interests or experiences
- contains patterned, rhythmic language
- contains repetitive action

Some favorite storytelling books are:

The Three Bears
The Gingerbread Boy
Chicken Little
The Little Engine That Could
Caps for Sale
The Little Red Hen
Three Billy Goats Gruff
Jack and the Beanstalk

It is fun to become a good storyteller. Techniques improve each time they are used. The listeners' enthusiastic response is ample reward for becoming an accomplished storyteller.

Steps to Follow

1. Choose a book you like.
2. Read it a few times to become familiar with the story.
3. Briefly write down the events in sequence.
4. Note any important language or phrases.
5. Reconstruct the story in your mind. Try to include any important details.
6. Read the story aloud several times. Read with expression, varying tone and emphasis.
7. Tell the story aloud. Use your voice and gestures to bring the story to life. Pace the story to children's rate of listening.
8. Practice until you feel comfortable enough to present the story to the children.

Children will want to hear stories over and over again, joining in with the storyteller until they, too, are able to retell the story to others.

Another kind of storytelling occurs when teachers tell stories to children about their own lives, or the lives of people they know. Children are especially interested in hearing these stories when they concern other children or incidents with which they are familiar. A special relationship is established when a teacher shares these true experiences with the youngsters. Although stories are often used to illustrate understandings, they should never be of a frightening or threatening nature.

Children are storytellers, too. By sharing their experiences, they learn to use language, order their thoughts, and communicate ideas. Some of these stories may be written down by the teacher or another adult, illustrated by the children, bound into books, and placed in the class library. The young authors can share their stories by "reading" them to the other children.

When teachers model storytelling, children become storytellers themselves. Through "telling" and listening, they experience the enjoyment and beauty of oral language in this warm, personal activity. Storytelling, an important link between listening, comprehension, and reading, helps children to make connections between oral and written language.

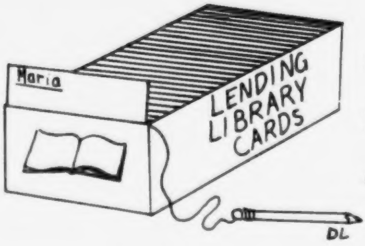
Teachers should incorporate this rewarding activity into their prekindergarten classrooms as often as possible.

Lending Library

The Lending Library is an important link between school and home. It offers parents an opportunity to share in children's classroom experiences, and to extend those experiences in an informal way. When books are taken home, children enjoy them over and over again; they become comfortable with storybook language and text.

Once the Library Center has been established, a Lending Library system may be introduced.

How to Do It



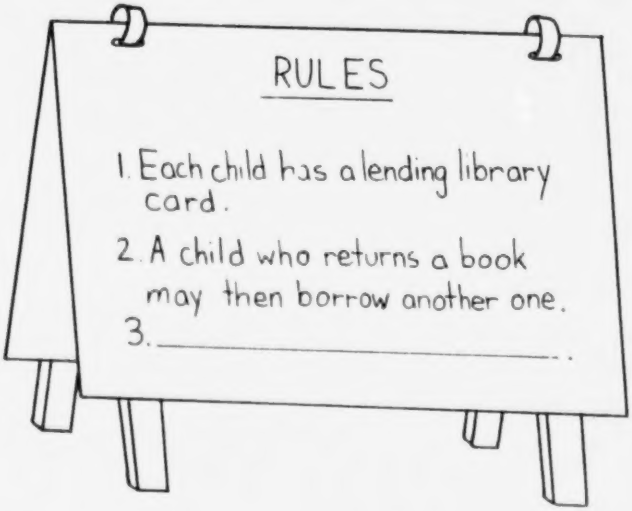
1. Cover a shoebox with colorful contact paper. Label the box "Lending Library Cards." Paste pictures of books on the box.
2. Attach a pencil to the box with a string.
3. Place the box in an accessible place.
4. Prepare a 5" x 8" index card for each child. Underline each child's name in red ink to facilitate finding individual cards.
5. Set up rules for the Lending Library with the children.

Sample Card

Shakima Anderson

Title	Date Borrowed	Date Returned
The Snowy Day	Oct. 29	Oct. 30
Trucks	Oct. 30	Nov. 5
Caps for Sale	Nov. 5	

Sample Rules



RULES

1. Each child has a lending library card.
2. A child who returns a book may then borrow another one.
3. ____________________.

As children get ready to leave at the end of each day, they may select library books to take home. Books are returned upon arrival at school. As books are borrowed and returned, an older child or adult (teacher, educational assistant, or parent volunteer) fills out the index cards for the children. To simplify recordkeeping, cross out the entire line when a book is returned.

The index cards serve to measure children's growth by documenting choices and range of interest. Some children will select the same books repeatedly, while others may prefer a wide variety. The perceptive teacher uses this information:

- to encourage children to borrow a variety of books.
- to assist children in finding other books about a particular topic.
- to obtain additional library books related to children's interests.
- to plan activities based on children's interests.

How to Do It

Here is another method for establishing a Lending Library system:

1. Cover two coffee cans or other containers with contact paper. Label each container "Lending Library." On one, display a picture of a book; on the other, a picture of children carrying books.

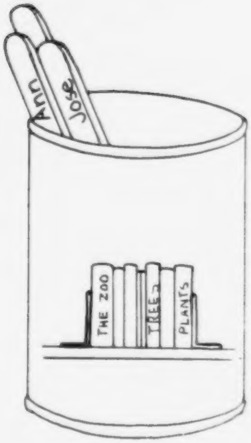
2. With a magic marker, write each child's name on a tongue depressor or popsicle stick.

3. When children borrow books, they place their sticks in the container displaying a picture of children carrying books.

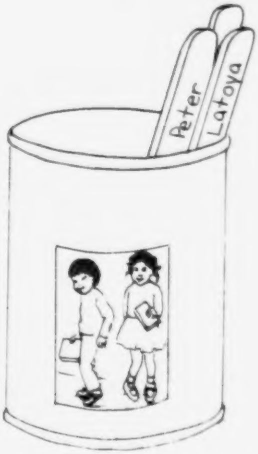
4. When books are returned, children place their sticks in the container displaying a picture of a book.

5. Only those children whose sticks are in the "book" container may borrow another book.

Lending Library



Lending Library



Although this system does not maintain an ongoing record of book titles or dates, it allows independent use by the children. The teacher can ascertain by a glance at the containers who still has books at home. In classrooms where there is limited assistance from other adults, the teacher may find this method more desirable. Books may be checked periodically against the teacher's own list to find out if any are missing.

It is a good idea to keep multiple copies of library books, especially the children's favorites. Single copies can be marked with a red dot to indicate that they must remain in the classroom. This ensures that a variety of books is available for reading in the library corner.

Letters may be sent home informing parents about the Lending Library and enlisting their cooperation and support. Sample letters follow:

Dear Parents,

Our class has a Lending Library. Each child may borrow one book and keep it home for one to five days. A record will be kept of all books borrowed and returned.

When a book is returned, another book may be borrowed. In this way, all the children will be able to share the library books.

Please make our library a success by helping your child take care of the books and return them on time.

Sincerely,

Teacher's Signature

Dear Parents,

Our Lending Library is off to a good start. The children have been taking books home and returning them promptly. When the books come home, you might like to:

- read the book to your child
- talk about the story
- enjoy the pictures together
- listen to your child retell the story
- hear your child "read" the book.

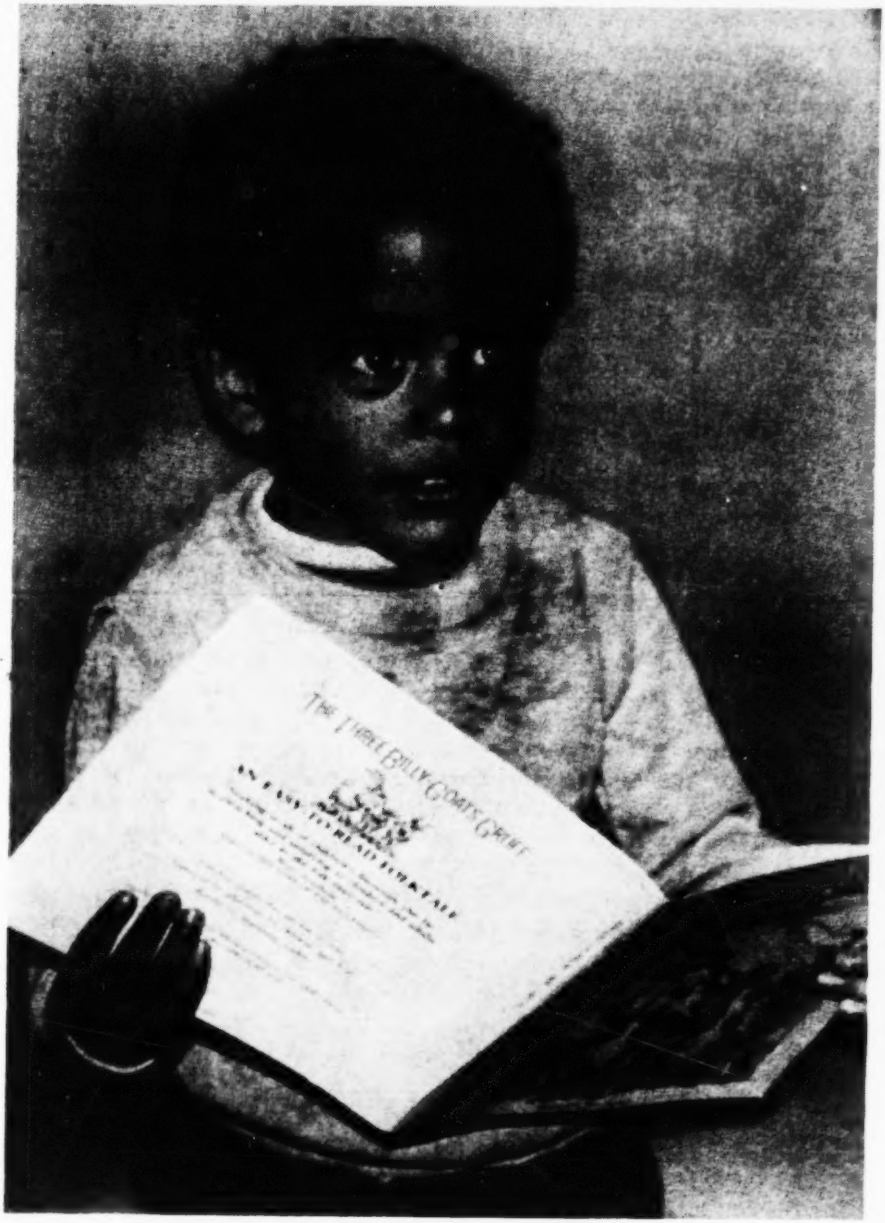
Please let us know what you think of our Lending Library.

Sincerely,

Teacher's Signature

The Lending Library can be introduced to the class at a special meeting. Children may discuss the importance of taking care of the books, turning the pages carefully, and making sure that the books are kept in "safe" places at home.

A BOOK IS A FRIEND. TREAT IT WITH KINDNESS.


The Three Billy Goats Gruff

ERIC

Limited English Proficiency

Four-year-olds bring to school the language and cultural patterns of their homes. It is of paramount importance that the teacher demonstrate respect for children's languages and cultures, and thus for the children themselves! This sensitivity is particularly important with Limited English Proficient (LEP) children, who are apt to make the disconcerting discovery that the language and behaviors that have served them thus far may no longer be useful or appropriate in some settings. We must help children learn a new language and new culture while maintaining esteem for the traditions and values they bring with them to school.

Understanding elements of the child's culture and providing support will enable teachers to make each child feel welcome and eager to participate in the learning experience. The following examples highlight many variables that teachers may observe in children from diverse backgrounds:

- Little or no eye contact when speaking to elders is a sign of respect in Hispanic cultures.
- In Asian cultures the head is considered holy and should not be touched or patted.
- In Haitian culture, using the given or family name is not as great a sign of respect as using a title, such as "teacher."
- Gesturing with a crooked finger pointing upward to indicate "come here" is used only for animals in Indo-Chinese countries. The gesture to people is with four fingers pointing downward.
- Tastes in food vary from culture to culture. A treat brought in by one child may not be as pleasurable to another child.

With guidance and patient encouragement, Limited English Proficient children can participate fully in the prekindergarten program. They can acquire English through the use of ESL approaches based on meaningful communication using natural language. Toward this end, teachers must realize that:

- Children's comprehension exceeds their production; that is, they understand more English than they are able to speak.

- Children will speak when they are ready. It takes time to make sense of the rhythm, stress, and intonation of English. Although children will demonstrate understanding and respond nonverbally, they may not be ready for oral production for several weeks or months.

- Children focus on content, not form; meaning is more important than sentence structure or word order. Pointing, touching, and other nonverbal responses, single-word utterances, and short phrases are appropriate. Encourage free, natural interaction, so children can focus their energy on discovery and exploration rather than the production of complex strings of language.

In order for the teacher to guide and monitor Limited English Proficient children's understanding of their interaction with the environment, the teacher must ask questions that the child can answer and that can provide meaningful feedback for the teacher. The directions and questions suggested for each interest area are designed to provide language that is easily comprehensible to the children and which will help them participate freely in the activity or game they have chosen. Questions are included in each interest area to encourage the child who is reluctant to participate.

Directions are statements that direct the child to complete an action. Teachers must model the action or behavior as they give the direction, and then repeat the direction, encouraging the children to do what has been said on their own. Since many directions are given again and again, e.g., "Cover the paints," teachers will need to model less and less. As children's understanding of English increases, more complex directions may be given, e.g., "Put the blocks away, then choose a puzzle."

Questions are designed to involve the Limited English Proficient child in interest areas. The kinds of questions asked fall into specific categories:

- Directives, discussed in the previous section, which do not require a verbal response.

- Yes/no questions which require simply a "yes" or "no" answer from the child. Note, however, that critical thinking and reasoning may be required, even though the language of the answer is quite limited. "Will this toy fit on the shelf?"

- Alternative questions have the answer embedded in the question itself. The child hears possible answers in the question and selects one. "Do you want milk or juice?" Answers are a single word or a short phrase.

- Recall questions require the child to recall a fact or information. These questions begin with "who," "what," "when," "where," "how much," "how many," or "which." Answers will be a single word or phrase. Typical questions might be:

  "Who is at the water table?"
  "How many blocks do you have?"

Answers to questions will vary from child to child, depending on previous experiences and facility with English. Therefore, answers are provided in only a few instances, as a guide. Remember, nonverbal responses, single-word utterances, and short phrases will be the norm.

A warm, nurturing environment will enable each child, regardless of background, to share unique talents and knowledge with classmates. The Limited English Proficient child will enrich and be enriched by the prekindergarten experience.

Children with Special Needs

Attending school for the first time is a challenge for young children. Belonging to a large social group, making work/play choices, planning block structures, sharing, and waiting one's turn are difficult experiences for four-year-olds. They can be overwhelming for the child with special needs. The prekindergarten teacher is sensitive to children who present special health problems, physical disabilities, emotional adjustment or language processing difficulties, and learning problems. Some of the characteristics exhibited by such children are:

- patterns of behavior six months to one-and-a-half years below chronological age;
- short attention span with self-choice activities;
- inordinate desire for attention;
- continued withdrawal from activities;
- inability to manipulate simple classroom materials;
- failure to understand and follow simple directions;
- inability to communicate ideas and feelings;
- marked lack of impulse control;
- excessive dependence on adult assistance when participating in simple class routines like snack time, toileting, playing with table toys;
- infantile speech patterns;
- marked lack of coordination.

The prekindergarten teacher, paraprofessional, and parent volunteer plan activities to accommodate and facilitate the different levels of participation by the child with special needs in particular skill areas. The flexibility of the teacher to allow for individual learning rates and styles promotes the child's development in various skill areas - physical, socio-emotional, language, self-help, and cognitive. In the supportive and flexible environment, the child:

- is included in group activities, but given adequate time and help to complete tasks.
- may choose to sit quietly and look at a book or listen to music while other children engage in active play.
- is provided with many opportunities for peer modelling, for example, observing and then assisting a child build a tower of blocks or set the table for snack time.
- participates in activities, such as cooking, with a very small group of children under the direction of the paraprofessional.
- paints at the easel with the assistance of a parent volunteer.
- completes puzzles containing only a few large pieces.
- may engage in other activities, such as using clay or paint, while group is listening to a story.
- is provided with additional opportunities for reinforcing self-help skills, such as buttoning, zipping, preparing snacks, pouring.

Simple tasks using concrete experiences are tailored to meet the child's level of understanding. The teacher uses clear language when speaking to the special child, repeats instructions when necessary, and offers praise for small efforts. Expectations for development are realistic and flexible. The child who is developmentally delayed needs additional time and effort to catch up with normal growth. As needed, tasks may be broken down into component parts and taught in step-by-step sequence. Consistency, patience, and encouragement will help the special child adjust to the school experience.

Guidelines for Teaching the Prekindergarten Child with Special Needs

.LANGUAGE SKILLS.

. SOCIAL SKILLS.

.SELF-HELP SKILLS.

THE
CHILD's
SPECIAL
NEEDS

. proceed developmentally
. be concrete
. have fun
. be repetitive
. be consistent
. be precise

. be "firm yet fair"
. be specific
. be positive
. be sequential
. be flexible
. use multi-sensory approaches

The Multicultural/Nonsexist Classroom

Encouraging Cultural Diversity

The prekindergarten program recognizes that each child is unique and brings to school values, attitudes and habits learned in the first years at home. Many classrooms reflect our multicultural society and contain children from European and Middle Eastern backgrounds, Native Americans, Blacks, Hispanics, and Asians. The developmental approach of early childhood education provides many open opportunities to share the richness of this cultural diversity and to gain insights into the kinship of all people.

Cultural awareness is important to each child's self-image. The teacher builds upon the children's backgrounds by finding out about the traditions, legends, art, music, folklore, history, holidays, language, and specific heritage of each group. Special activities and events are planned to celebrate these unique contributions.

When children share their heritage, they begin to:

- enjoy participating in holiday celebrations of others.
- develop early socialization skills.
- interact with the music, rhythms, and dance of other cultures.
- develop respect and understanding for other people.
- hear/learn words in other languages.
- enjoy stories, poems, and folklore depicting different families, people, and environments.

The teacher observes children's interests, choices, and skills, and builds upon their understandings. Materials are selected and arranged to reflect the variety of ethnic backgrounds represented in the composition of the classroom:

- Cooking utensils and playfoods appropriate to various cultures are placed in the housekeeping corner.
- Props and clothing representative of the children's backgrounds are included for dramatic play.
- Dolls reflect a variety of ethnic groups.
- Library books contain pictures of many people and places.
- Records offer songs and music of many nations.
- Traditional games are included as choices for children's play.

Classroom activities are planned to develop appreciation of other cultures:

- Cooking and snack experiences include a variety of ethnic foods.
- Multicultural literature is shared with the children.
- Ethnic dances and songs are enjoyed.
- Rhythmic chants and poems are taught.
- Children learn common phrases and greetings in languages other than English.
- Mother Goose rhymes are read to the children in different languages.
- Selections for listening and moving to music include choices from different cultures.
- Special seasonal festivities and holidays are celebrated in the classroom.

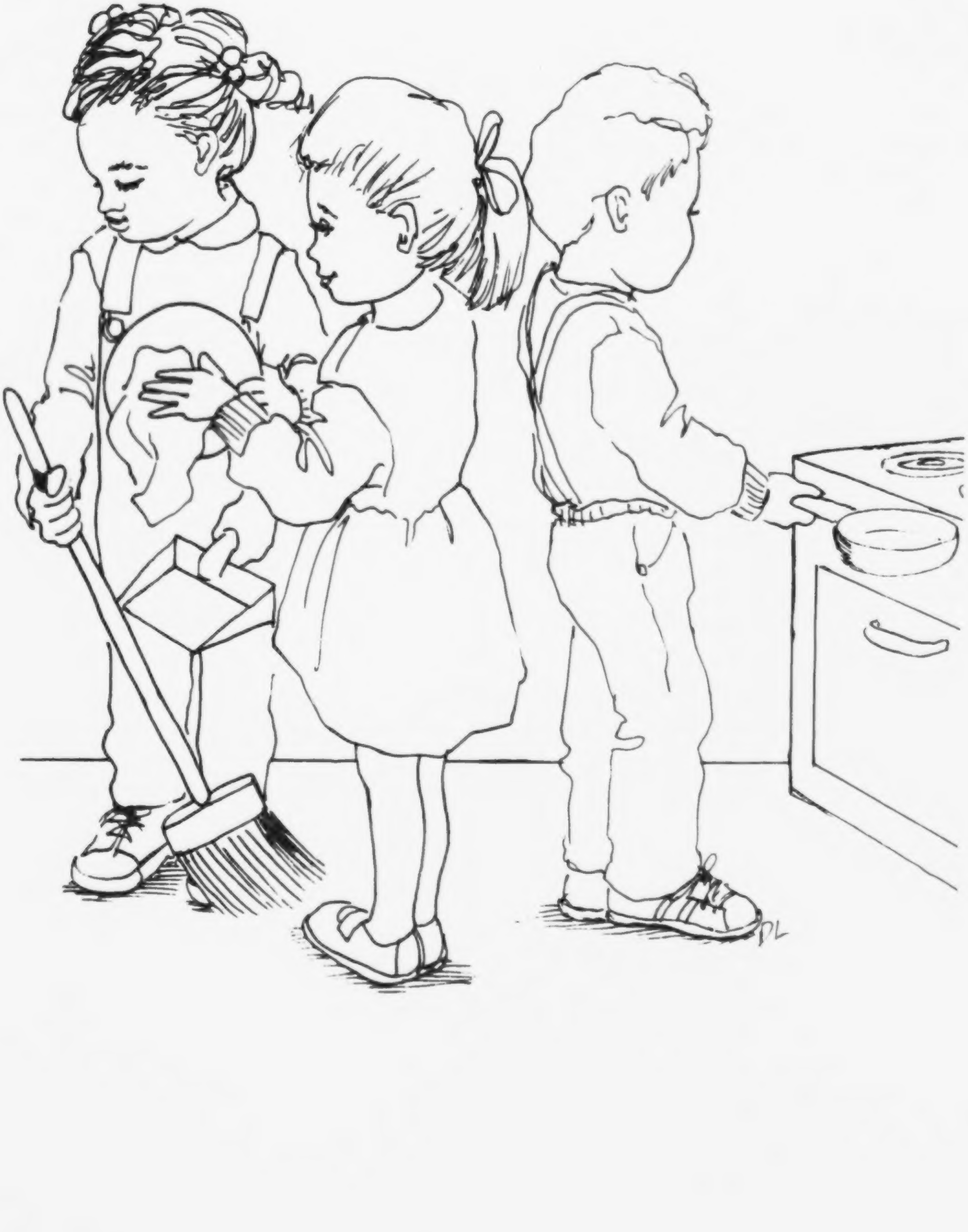
The prekindergarten staff involves parents in developing the curriculum for multicultural awareness. Parents are invited to school to talk about family customs, and show photographs of special costumes and celebrations. Parents can share favorite recipes, or traditional crafts or instruments, with the children.

Avoiding Sexism

The prekindergarten program provides nonsexist experiences to help four-year-olds develop positive self-images and realize their full potential. It is important that the staff:

- avoid sexist language and phrases. ("Mary is a tomboy." "Boys are not nurses." "Tamika, that is not ladylike behavior.")
- avoid sexism in assigning tasks. ("Girls don't drive trains.")
- create nonsexist interest areas with equal activities for boys and girls.
- use teaching materials and books which depict both males and females in nurturing roles.
- encourage children to choose from a variety of occupational roles and props as they work/play.
- provide time for both boys and girls to engage in active and quiet play.
- allow boys and girls to participate in all physical activities they enjoy in order to become strong and physically fit.
- encourage respect and friendship between girls and boys.
- place nonsexist games, puzzles, toys, and manipulatives on the shelves in the classroom.
- allow both boys and girls to exhibit a full range of emotions. Avoid language that inhibits emotional expression. ("Boys don't cry." "Marcos is acting like a sissy.")

In a multicultural and nonsexist prekindergarten, an unbiased view of the world can be presented to four-year-olds. Children realize that they are free to make choices from a variety of options. While working and playing together, they learn to respect and accept each other. Ultimately, they develop lifelong understandings and positive attitudes towards all human beings.



THE INTEREST AREAS

Teachers provide a classroom environment that is rich in materials and opportunities for exploration. Cooking activities like preparing jello or popcorn reinforce the concepts of change and properties of objects, as well as developing oral language and an understanding of good nutrition and mathematics.

The use of sand and water tables allows for much experimentation with measurement and relationships. Water can take the shape of its container, be transported through tubes, form ripples, and show reflections. Problem-solving opportunities during these activities stimulate children's mental activity.

Classroom pets and plants give children an opportunity to become familiar with needs of living things, as well as a chance to observe, describe, and try to record their growth patterns and changes over time. Teachers ask questions that lead children to think and predict. Questions directly relate to children's activities.

Texture books or boxes, and other opportunities to use the senses of touch, hearing, smell, sight, and taste through experimentation and discovery are given to the children. Peer interactions result in shared ideas, problem solving, and cooperation.

Musical activities and movement exercises help develop large and small muscles. Climbing, pedaling, throwing a ball, drawing, painting, cutting, and puzzle-solving are all necessary activities for four-year-olds. These activities, in conjunction with an awareness of good nutrition, will help children want to learn about their bodies and body parts.

Interest areas provide an appropriate setting for the development of language and learning in the prekindergarten.

Interest Area — **Active Play**

Action is natural for young children. Many preschoolers rarely walk. To get from one side of the room to the other, they are just as likely to run, gallop, skip, hop, or dance along the way.

Large-muscle activities are essential for children's health and physical development. They are also important for the development of self-confidence and for social development. Among four-year-olds, acceptance can sometimes depends on a child's physical competence. Therefore, teachers should try to help the timid, cautious, unskilled, or less coordinated child to develop skills.

Four-year-olds are often highly competitive, but they have a very hard time dealing with competition. Thus, games where there are winners or losers should be avoided. Teachers can, instead, encourage competing against oneself. For example, a child can try to run faster, climb higher, or do a more difficult trick than yesterday.

Children are often discouraged when they can't do something that another child can do. Teachers can help by pointing out that the skilled child didn't always know how to do that particular trick, and may have spent weeks and weeks practicing. In addition, all children should frequently be reminded of which new skills they themselves have mastered at this time.

Tips

- Provide adult supervision for large climbers and slides.
- Establish boundaries around slides and swings.
- Plan easy ways to transport materials to play area, such as laundry bags for balls; hoops tied together with ropes; shopping bags for ropes, chalk, and tape.
- Talk about what children are doing, using descriptive action words ("I see Joanne hanging upside down." "Tony is sliding on his stomach.")
- If a child has climbed up but is afraid to climb down, don't lift the child down. (This will not build confidence.) Instead, teach the child how to do it by giving simple instructions, one at a time, such as "Hold on here...Now put this foot on this bar...Now move this hand to this bar..."

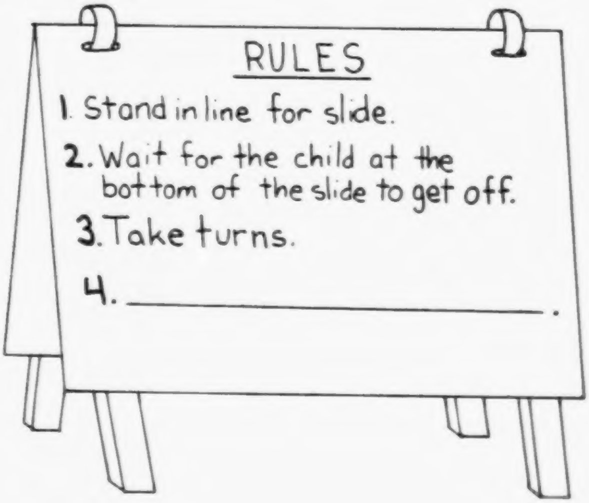
Teacher Preparation

THINK
IT
THROUGH

- Select/make materials.
- Select and set up equipment.
- Establish rules with children.
- Establish safety procedures with staff.
- Learn/make up songs and chants to use while children play.
- Plan games.
- Make circles or lines on floor or playground with chalk or tape.

Basic Materials

- steps and board
- climber or slide
- balls
- ropes
- hoops
- large wooden blocks
- chalk
- masking tape


RULES
1. Stand in line for slide.
2. Wait for the child at the bottom of the slide to get off.
3. Take turns.
4. ______________.

- Help set up or carry light equipment.
- Make jumping circles with chalk or rope.
- Make walking line with long rope.
- Make walking path with large blocks.
- Make up games
- Help put away equipment.

Exploring and Discovering

Children may:

- climb up, down, over, and through, using indoor or outdoor climbers.
- hang by two hands, one hand, or knees from climbers, chinning bars, or trapeze bars in the classroom, gym, playground, or park.
- slide on slides or boards.
- crawl on boards, under climbers, through tunnels, or under a row of chairs or tables arranged by the teacher.
- jump from varying heights off climbers or steps.
- jump over a rope or broomstick raised to varying heights.
- jump over a rope wiggled like a snake on the floor.
- jump over a "river" made by placing two ropes or yardsticks parallel to each other on the floor and gradually moving them farther and farther apart.
- jump into and out of circles or squares made with chalk, tape, or rope.
- sometimes try to jump rope.
- roll and catch a ball.
- bounce, dribble, and sometimes catch their own balls.
- catch a large ball, when an adult tosses it gently into their outstretched arms.
- sometimes catch a ball thrown by a child.
- toss a ball into a low basketball hoop, cardboard box, or other large container.
- toss rubber, plastic, or rope rings and rubber horseshoes onto an upright stick.
- throw or toss a variety of objects (cloth and foam balls, bean bags, or snowballs) at targets. (Permanent wall targets can be made on oaktag or cloth; chalk targets can be drawn on outdoor walls. Targets can be the bull's eye type with concentric circles, or separate circles with numerals inside. Other targets might be a large piece of heavy cardboard, a cardboard box, or a board with holes cut out. Styrofoam balls with Velcro strips will stick to a fuzzy target.)
- use large plastic hoops to roll and catch, jump in and out of, or sometimes try to twirl with their bodies.
- walk slowly, quickly, on toes, using tiny steps, using giant steps, forward, backward, sideways, with sliding steps, with marching steps.

- walk on lines (straight, curved, zig-zag, or circular) made on the floor or playground using chalk, tape, or ropes.
- walk on a balance beam.
- run in a circle.
- run to touch a designated spot, object, or color.
- run when called by their names, by the colors or type of clothes they are wearing (e.g., "everyone wearing blue...everyone wearing jackets with zippers...")
- lift, carry, pull, or push large hollow blocks to:
  - build their own creations.
  - make paths to walk or crawl on.
  - make an obstacle course to walk around.
- move like animals (e.g., cat, elephant, frog, snake, inchworm, fish, horse, crab, spider, butterfly, monkey).
- use tumbling mats to roll, jump onto, turn forward and backward somersaults, and sometimes try to do handstands or cartwheels.

Teacher might ask:

- Can you show me a different way to get to the top of the climber?
- What do you see from way up there?
- How does the world look when you hang by your knees?
- Can you teach your friends your new trick?
- How far can you roll your hoop before it falls?
- How wide shall I make this "river" for you to jump across?
- How many times can you jump in and out of this circle?
- Can you make an easy walking path? a harder path?
- How does a worm walk? How does a duck walk?

Focus for the LEP Child

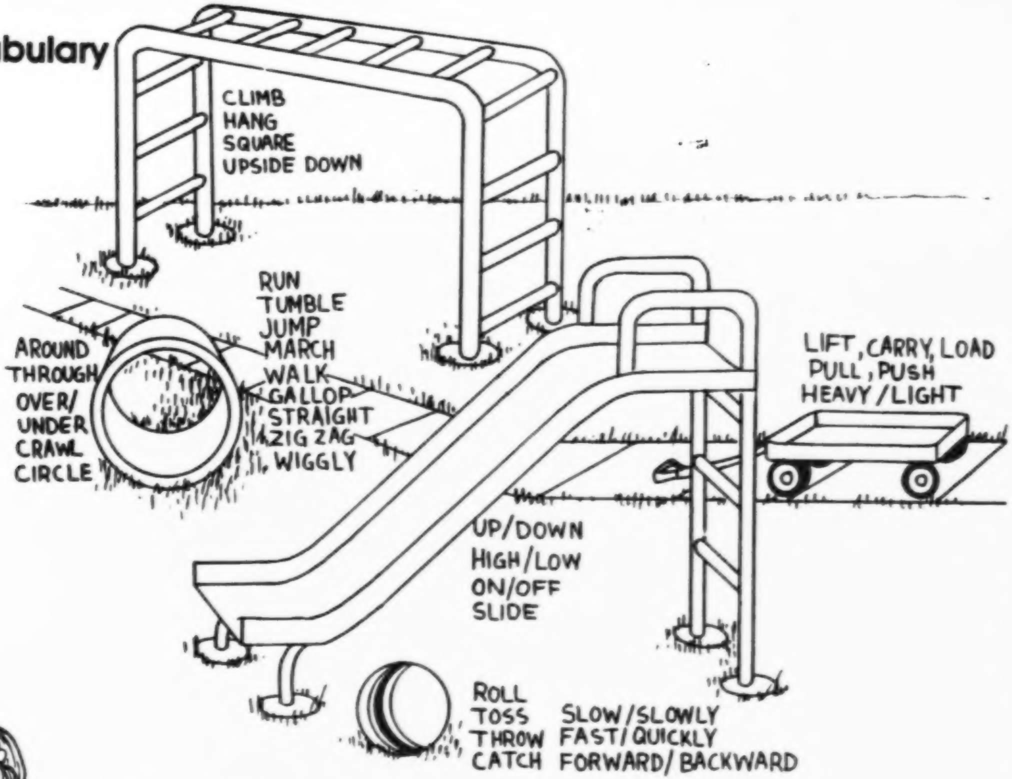
Teacher may direct:

- Run to the fence.
- Choose a partner.
- Catch the ball.

Teacher may ask:

- Can you climb to the top? Do you see houses? What do you see? (houses/buds/trees)
- How do you play with that?
- Do you want the rope or the hoop?

Vocabulary


CLIMB
HANG
SQUARE
UPSIDE DOWN
RUN
TUMBLE
JUMP
MARCH
WALK
GALLOP
STRAIGHT
ZIG ZAG
WIGGLY
AROUND
THROUGH
OVER/
UNDER
CRAWL
CIRCLE
LIFT, CARRY, LOAD
PULL, PUSH
HEAVY / LIGHT
UP/DOWN
HIGH/LOW
ON/OFF
SLIDE
ROLL
TOSS
THROW
CATCH
SLOW/SLOWLY
FAST/QUICKLY
FORWARD/BACKWARD

Skills

- development of balance skills
- perceptual-motor development
- eye-hand coordination
- perception of spatial relationships
- understanding of spatial concepts and vocabulary (e.g., prepositions like over/under)
- inventing actions and action sequences
- imitating
- following directions
- giving directions
- waiting for turns
- cooperative play
- counting

MORE IDEAS

Other Materials

- boards and ladders to attach to climbers
- wagons or handtrucks
- wheelbarrows
- tricycles
- large wooden boxes
- swings
- tumbling mats
- bean bags and target

- horseshoe and ring-toss games
- Velcro balls and target
- basketball hoop
- plastic or foam baseball bats

Other Activities

- Play bowling games, using commercial plastic sets, or make games using empty plastic detergent bottles or milk cartons as pins.
- Play simplified "hopscotch," where children take turns jumping (instead of hopping) from one numbered square to the next.
- Invent a non-competitive scoring system for target games when children are ready for counting. Use numbers one to five on the targets. Provide materials with a large number of pieces, such as Lego, pegs, table blocks, Tinker Toys. As children hit numbers on the target, they take the equivalent number of pieces, and make constructions with them.
- Teach children simple games. Circle running games include "Duck, Duck, Goose," "A-Tisket-a-Tasket," or "Bluebird, Bluebird, Through My Window." Games involving following directions and imitating movements include "Punchinello," "Monkey See, Monkey Do," "Simon Says," and "Giant Steps."

Interest Area — **Animals**

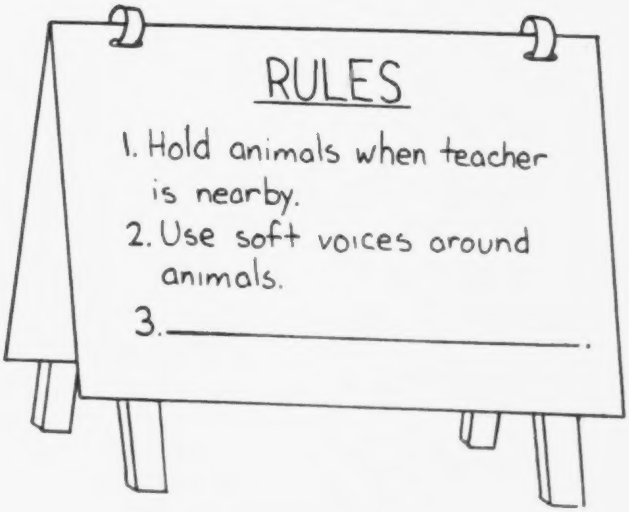
Young children are intrigued by animals. They love to watch fish swishing their tails as they dart back and forth. They feel grown-up and important as they help to fill the hamster's water bottle and food dish. They watch in awe as the butterfly emerges from its cocoon. And they wriggle and squirm with delight as a tiny worm tickles their hands.

- Teach children how to touch and hold animals correctly.
- Let children hold animals only under close supervision.
- Teach children to gently touch or stroke the animal's back with one finger.
- When observing animals on the floor, help both animals and children feel safe by building a large "pen" with blocks. Ask children to look, not touch.
- Remember that loud or sudden noises frighten animals.

Teacher Preparation

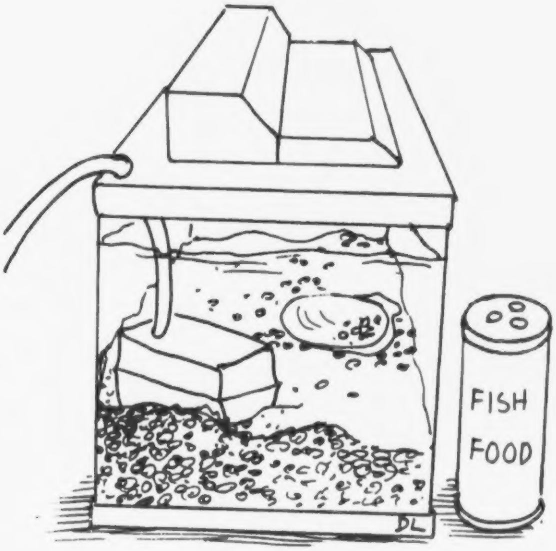
THINK
IT
THROUGH

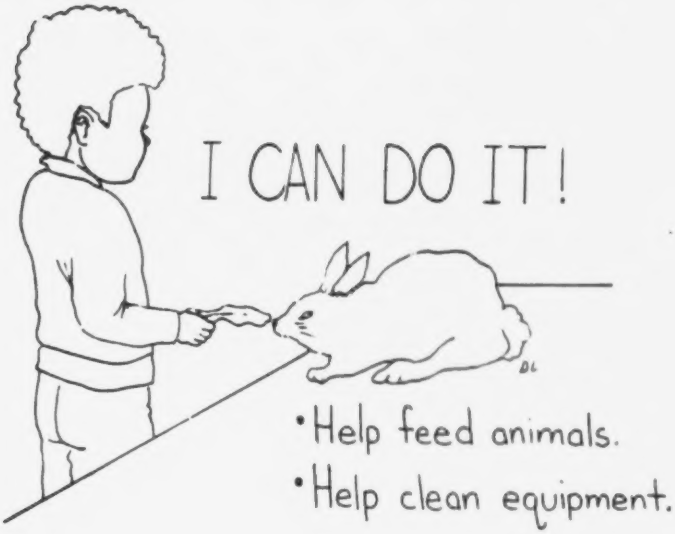
- Read about animals.
- Visit pet shops.
- Check for children with allergies.
- Choose animals.
- Plan classroom space for animals.
- Buy or make necessary equipment.
- Plan for children's participation in caring for animals.
- Establish rules and safety measures.


RULES
1. Hold animals when teacher is nearby.
2. Use soft voices around animals.
3. ____________.

Basic Materials

- animals
- tanks or cages
- water and food containers
- food and water
- newspaper
- cedar shavings (for mammals)
- rocks or gravel, and lights, filters, and tubes for aquariums
- books about/pictures of animals


FISH
FOOD
DL


I CAN DO IT!
DL
•Help feed animals.
•Help clean equipment.

Exploring and Discovering

Children may:

. observe animals:
  - to find out how they move.
  - to find out what and how they eat.
  - to look for and count eyes, ears, nose, mouth, teeth, tongue, legs, feet, toes, arms, paws, fingers, tails, whiskers, hair, eyelashes.
  - to describe fur, feathers, scales, skin.
  - to compare animals with humans.
  - to compare different animals.

. touch animals:
  - to discover how they feel.
  - to compare fur, feathers, scales, skin.
  - to feel and demonstrate gentle, loving care.

. listen to animals:
  - to find out what kind of sounds they make.
  - to try to imitate animal sounds.

. use books about animals:
  - to listen to stories and find out information relating to animals.
  - to look for and identify pictures of animals.

- look at and talk about photographs and illustrations of animals displayed on classroom walls.
- talk about animals they have seen.
- talk about care of pets at home or animals they have seen in a zoo, on TV, on the street.
- imitate animals moving, eating, making sounds.

Thinking Questions

Teacher might ask:

- How do you think we could find out which is the worm's head and which is its tail?
- Does the guinea pig have eyelashes?
- Do turtles close their eyes? Do fish?
- Does the turtle have teeth? a tongue?
- How many toes does the turtle have on this foot? How many does the guinea pig have?
- Which way do fish move their tails, up and down or from side to side?
- How do different animals (e.g., cats, dogs, birds, turtles, rabbits) protect themselves?

Focus for the LEP Child

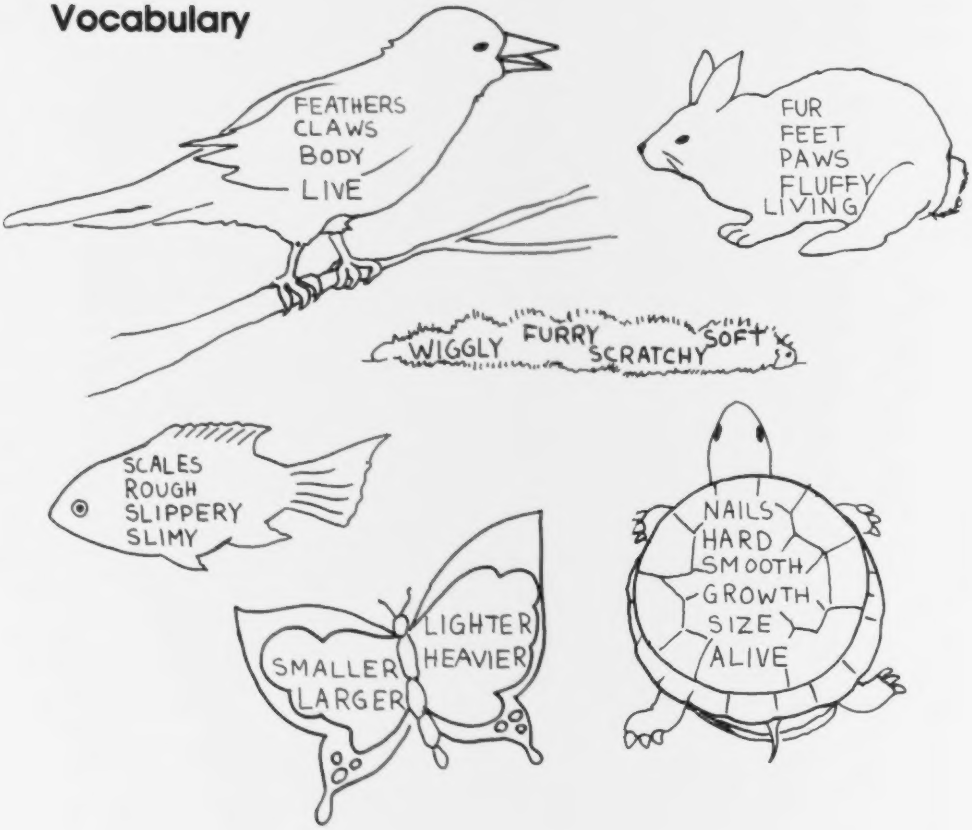
Teacher may direct:

- Put the food dish here in the cage, please.
- Cover the turtle's bowl.
- Count the fish with me.

Teacher may ask:

- Is the rabbit eating or drinking? What is the rabbit eating/drinking?
- Which gerbil is digging?
- Are the rabbit's ears big or little?
- Where does the turtle live?

Vocabulary


FEATHERS
CLAWS
BODY
LIVE
FUR
FEET
PAWS
FLUFFY
LIVING
WIGGLY
FURRY
SCRATCHY
SOFT
SCALES
ROUGH
SLIPPERY
SLIMY
LIGHTER
HEAVIER
SMALLER
LARGER
NAILS
HARD
SMOOTH
GROWTH
SIZE
ALIVE

Skills

- observing
- describing
- comparing
- grouping
- counting

MORE IDEAS

Other Activities

Children may:

- make books of animals from magazine pictures.
- bring pictures of their pets to school.
- take trips:
  - to visit other animals in the school.
  - to look for animals outdoors.
  - to see animals in zoos or aquarium.
- play animal matching and Lotto games.
- watch filmstrips/films about animals.

Interest Area — **Art**

Introduction

The colorful, tactile quality of art material stimulates prekindergarteners to explore and manipulate paint, clay, crayons, and other items. Four-year-olds enjoy being able to control art media through their own movements. When they discover lines and forms they have created, they may begin to name them. These sometimes scribbled symbols are important for young children engaged in the creative process. Specific "products" of the children's work are not as important as the process of creating them.

Art activity holds great potential for enhancing child development. During art experiences children socialize, share, and increase language capabilities. Pride in artwork goes hand in hand with the child's emerging self-concept.

Because art activity is such an important part of everyday life in prekindergarten, it is essential to set up the center in a manner that will facilitate and encourage its daily use. Even when space is limited, an orderly, attractive arrangement of art materials will invite children's participation. They can work at a table, easel, or on a low cabinet top. Frequently, young children are most comfortable doing work on the floor. Teachers also invent ways of saving work space by taping drawing and painting papers to cartons or walls.

The following suggestions should assist teachers who are concerned about where to locate the Art Center, how to store materials, and how to expedite cleanup.

Locating the Art Center

- Find a spot with good natural light, but not where children must face strong sunlight.
- Place the center away from noisy play areas, using cabinet(s) to define the area if possible.
- Keep workplaces for wet materials, such as paints and clay, separate from collage, drawing, and construction.

Storing Materials

- Crayons, chalk, assorted papers, and yarn can be stored where they are visible to children. Use cast-off containers such as shoe boxes, cookie tins, smooth-edged coffee canisters, and cut-down plastic jugs or cartons.
- If shelf space is inadequate, suspend shoebags or shopping bags from wooden ledges and moldings. They can hold bulky "found" materials like cardboard tubes, small boxes, wood scraps, paper plates.

- Arrange small items in divided boxes or trays.

- Store scissors in holes punched through an inverted carton.

(art--illustrate scissors in carton.)

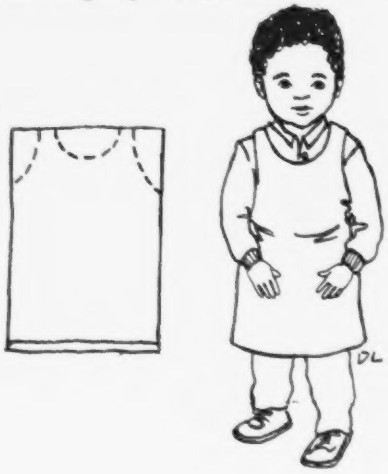
Cleanup

- Provide sponges, basins, and paper towels.

- If the room has no sink, a table in the Art Center should be provided for water containers and other materials. A bucket for used water can be put under the table. Fill quart and half-gallon plastic jugs with fresh water daily. Provide small cosmetic squeeze bottles for children who have difficulty handling large containers. The water supply will be handy to use for mixing paints and clay, as well as for water painting on the chalkboard.

- Smocks made from old shirts, worn in reverse, can be made extra absorbent if towelling is sewn onto the shirts. The towelling becomes a convenient handwiper, too.

- Make emergency smocks from several thicknesses of newspaper taped together. Heavy-gauge plastic trash-bags cut as in the diagram make handy extra smocks too.



Basic Materials

- liquid or powdered tempera paint
- thick crayons
- fingerpaint and slick paper
- markers
- colored chalk
- moist potters' clay
- dough clay (see recipe)
- paste and white glue
- wood scraps
- clay boards
- 1/2" and 1" paintbrushes
- scissors
- tape
- large sheets of paper (manila drawing paper and newsprint)
- tagboard
- colored construction paper
- newspaper
- wallpaper samples
- a variety of "found" papers
- yarn
- mesh
- small cardboard boxes for construction
- natural materials for collage (shells, leaves, acorns)

Teacher Preparation

THINK
IT
THROUGH

- Try out materials to check for safety.
- Establish rules with children.
- Make parents partners in saving cast-offs for art.
- Provide space for individual and/or small group participation.
- Have smocks which children can handle independently.

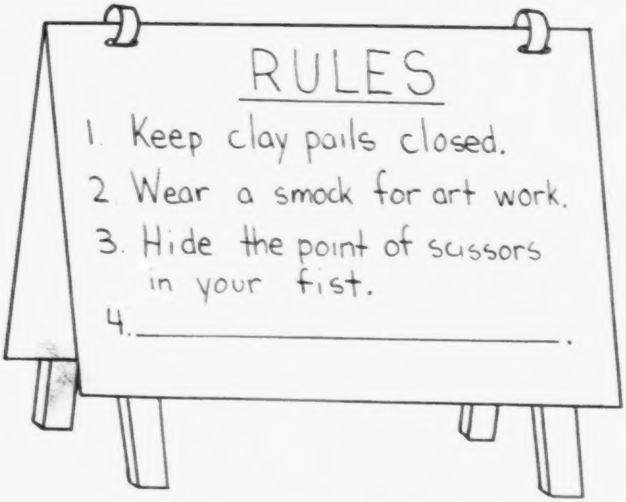
Tips

- Choose raw materials which can be used in many ways, e.g., paper, clay, paint.
- Arrange items for easy access and cleanup.
- Add new materials slowly.
- Allow children time for exploration.
- Keep rules simple.

- Work along with children when possible.
- Let children talk about their work only when they wish to.
- Tell them why you like their art.
- Observe and keep records of children's art.
- Provide display areas on children's eye level.

I CAN DO IT !

- Select medium or area.
- Put on smock.
- Find materials.
- Join art group.
- Help set up materials.
- Help get cleanup materials ready.



RULES

1. Keep clay pails closed.
2. Wear a smock for art work.
3. Hide the point of scissors in your fist.
4. ______________.

Exploring and Discovering

Children may:

- paint at easel or on paper placed on floor or table.
- draw on paper with markers, crayons, or a combination of materials.
- tear, cut, and paste small papers onto larger ones.
- fingerpaint on glossy paper or laminated tabletop.
- chalk "paint" on wet paper.
- glue together wood and/or cardboard pieces.
- model moist clay and dough clay with fingers.
- assemble "found" materials.
- work with yarn.
- experiment with object printing (sponges, wood blocks, bottle caps, natural materials).

Thinking Questions

Teacher might ask:

- How did your yellow paint turn green?
- Why do you think the clay got harder?
- What made the crayon melt?
- How many brushes do we need for four cans of paint?
- Which colors are light? dark?
- What might happen if we don't wet the fingerpaint paper?
- What might happen to the paint over the weekend if we don't cover it?
- How did you make some paint lines thicker than others?
- Why did the paint drip?

Focus for the LEP Child

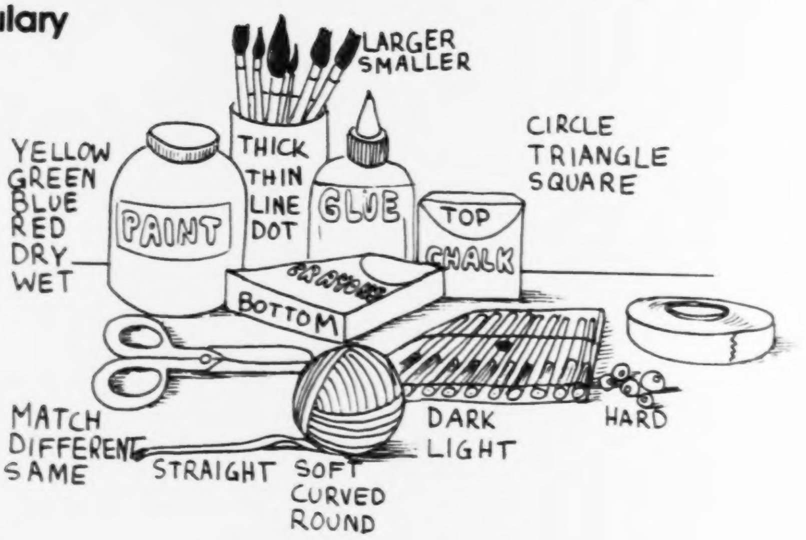
Teacher may direct:

- Cover the clay pail with this top, please.
- Choose your brushes.
- Let the painting dry.

Teacher may ask:

- Is the clay soft? Can you make a ball with it?
- Is this red or blue? (Red/Blue/It's red.)
- Who worked on the big picture with you? (_______ worked with me.)
- Can you make a thick line?
- What color crayon do you need? (Green/I need green.)

Vocabulary


LARGER
SMALLER
YELLOW
GREEN
BLUE
RED
DRY
WET
THICK
THIN
LINE
DOT
PAINT
GLUE
CIRCLE
TRIANGLE
SQUARE
TOP
CHALK
CRAYONS
BOTTOM
MATCH
DIFFERENT
SAME
STRAIGHT
SOFT
CURVED
ROUND
DARK
LIGHT
HARD

Skills

- experimenting
- predicting
- sequencing
- comparing
- counting
- understanding cause and effect
- associating
- estimating
- part-whole discrimination
- observing
- tactile discrimination

MORE IDEAS

Other Materials

- The "found" materials on the following list will offer children a variety of alternative materials and surfaces to decorate or use for assembly.

gift ribbon
sponges
food coloring
seeds
milk cartons
paper tubes
cardboard
waxed paper
foil
cotton
paperclips
squeeze bottles
egg cartons
cereal boxes
wire
old toothbrushes
spools
frozen food trays
candles

paper cups
paper plates
styrofoam
paper towels
paper napkins
tissues
newspaper
paper bags
magazines
greeting cards
coupons
catalogs
shopping bags
comic books
jar tops
salt boxes
empty cans
(edges smoothed)
spray can tops

bottle caps
soda carton
carriers
pie pans
supermarket trays
gift boxes
clothespins
toothpicks
rubber bands
coffee stirrers
ice cream sticks
nails and screws
pebbles and stones
shells
feathers
balloons
bobby or hair pins
sandwich bags
broken jewelry

coffee cans
sawdust
sequins
beads

plastic lids
plastic containers
plastic wrap
tongue depressors

buttons
lollipop sticks
thread and yarn
soap flakes

Other Activities

Children may:

- weave yarn and other fibers onto tree twigs, fences, berry cartons.
- combine cardboard boxes and natural, found objects into "arrangements."
- construct play spaces with large cartons and cardboard or other accessories.
- paint over heavy crayoned work with a thinned paint wash for background (resist).
- describe personal art discoveries.
- sort objects by shape and/or color (use paper plates with symbols on them).
- model with homemade modeling substances which, although not as suitable as natural clay, may be substituted (recipes follow) .

Self-hardening dough clay (baker's clay)

1 1/2 C. salt
4 C. flour
1 1/2 C. water
1 tsp. alum (as preservative when clay is not baked)

Mix the dry ingredients together in a plastic bowl, then add the water gradually. When it forms a ball around the spoon, knead the dough well, adding water if it is too crumbly. This clay can also be baked.

Soft dough clay (nonhardening)

Follow the previous recipe, but add one-half cup cooking oil and reduce the amount of water to one cup.

Cornstarch clay (hardens to a smooth finish)

1 C. water
3 C. salt
1 C. cornstarch

Mix the water and salt and place the pan over medium heat. Gradually mix in the cornstarch and heat until the mixture thickens into a mass. Cool the clay on a piece of aluminum foil before kneading.

Note: To add color to any of these recipes with the least mess, place the clay in a strong plastic bag. Drop in approximately three to four drops of food coloring or two teaspoons of tempera per cup of clay. Knead the color into the mixture by squeezing the bag until the color is evenly distributed.

Recipes for Fingerpaint

There are several economical methods for making fingerpaint. Two simple procedures follow:

1. Mix two parts of liquid laundry starch with one part powdered tempera or a few drops of food color.
2. Mix flour and cold water into a paste. Add liquid tempera or food color.

Note: A sprinkling of soap flakes (not detergent) added to either of these homemade fingerpaints helps make the mixtures glide over paper. In addition, the soap flakes make cleaning up more efficient. You may prefer to introduce fingerpainting to very young children by mixing soap flakes with a small amount of water and enough food color to make the mixture attractive.

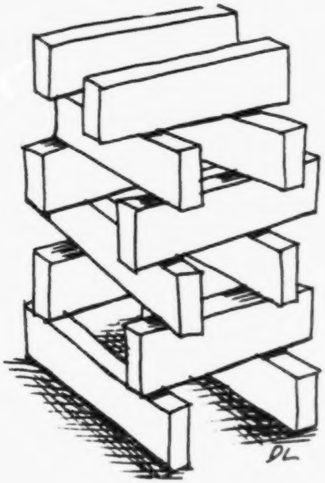
Interest Area — **Blocks**

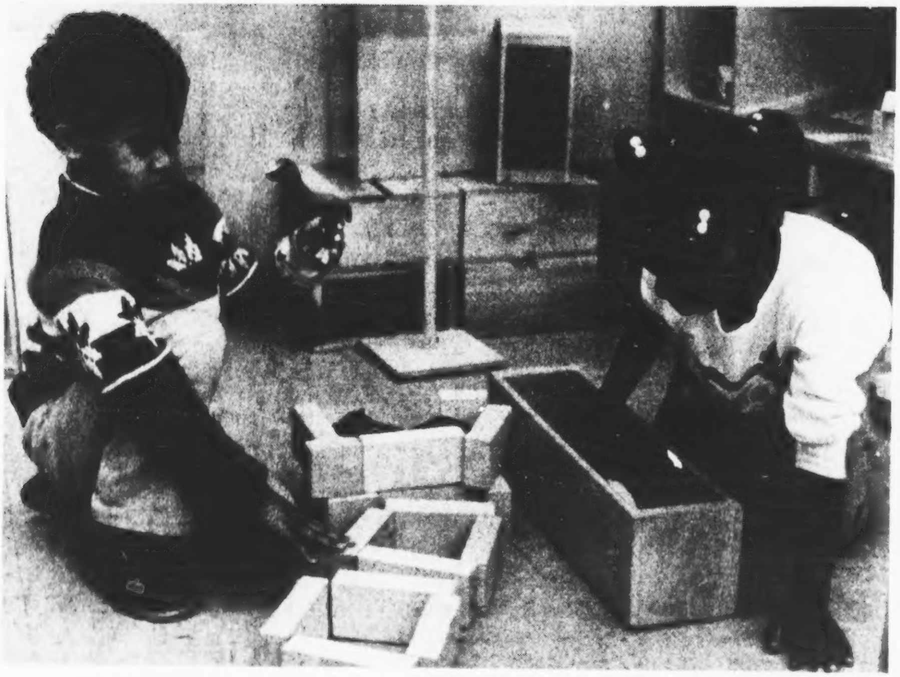
Blocks are the most versatile material in the prekindergarten room. Block building involves the whole child. Children use blocks to re-create what they know - a simple house, a simple garage, a simple road, and then they expand these structures into new and more complex structures. Children work seriously, diligently, and with utmost concentration when they are building.

Solid hardwood unit blocks come in a variety of shapes. Because the blocks are mathematically proportioned, children can discover size and weight relationships as they build. (For example, they may find that two squares equal a rectangle unit or that two triangles make a square.)

Children's first experiments with unit blocks are usually simple structures, such as an enclosure representing a house or barn, a road for their cars, or a tall tower. As children become familiar with the blocks, they begin to explore more possibilities, creating patterns and designs or experimenting with balance and symmetry, thereby creating more complex houses, interconnecting highways, even tunnels and bridges.

Children love to populate their buildings with small figures of people and animals. They may weave complicated story themes as they build, moving their characters in and out around their structures. Often the plot will require another building, and the children will restructure their first building or, if there are enough blocks, they will create a whole community! As children play out more complex themes (e.g., delivering food to the supermarket; loading cargo at the harbor) the teacher can add more information through books and trips and encourage children to work together.





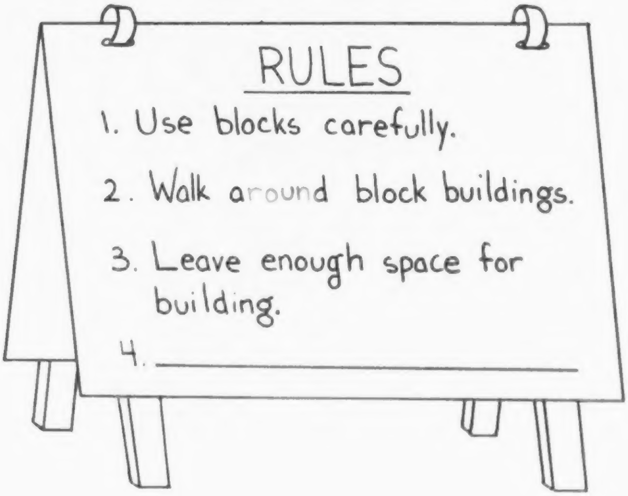
Tips

- Limit the number of children who can build at one time.
- Avoid overcrowding.
- Have adequate storage area.
- Have markings on the shelf to show which shapes belong on which shelf.
- Store blocks by shape.
- Participate in cleanup with the children.
- Make cleanup as pleasant as possible.
- Provide adequate floor space for children to build, away from the classroom traffic.
- Keep building area free from all furniture.
- Allow children to build without being constantly questioned about what they are building. Be available for discussion.

Teacher Preparation

THINK
IT
THROUGH

- Keep the block-building area free and ready for the children.
- Have cars, trucks, and other accessories available.


RULES
1. Use blocks carefully.
2. Walk around block buildings.
3. Leave enough space for building.
4. ________

Basic Materials

- A full set of blocks which include:
  - half units
  - units
  - double units
  - quadruple units
  - small cylinders
  - large cylinders
  - circular curves
  - elliptical curves
  - pairs of triangles - small
  - pairs of triangles - large
  - roof boards
  - ramps
  - Y switches
  - arches
- Block cabinets - one or two for storage. Cabinets should be large enough so that the blocks can be neatly piled according to shape and size and to a uniform height.

. Accessories:
  - cars
  - trucks
  - airplanes
  - buses
  - boats
  - figures of people of varying ethnic background
  - figures of family members
  - figures of people showing different occupations that are familiar to the children
  - figures of animals - farm animals and zoo animals, both large and small, to represent parent and child

Exploring and Discovering

Children may:

. build horizontally or vertically.
. experiment with shapes and sizes.
. create designs or representational structures.

- discover size and shape relationships.
- match or group blocks by size or shape.
- work alone, or with another child.
- experiment with balance and symmetry.
- talk about their buildings.
- build similar structures to one built previously.
- modify structures as play evolves.
- work at solving conceptual or structural problems as they build.
- cooperate in building and in cleanup.
- use their structures in conjunction with dramatic play, using small people and animal figures, vehicles, and furniture as props.

Thinking Questions

Teacher may ask:

- How did you build this?
- How do the cars get up to road/garage?
- Can you build a ramp?
- Can you add anything else to the building?
- Is there something else that you want to use in your building?
- If there are no more blocks of the size that you want, what else can you use?

Focus for the LEP Child

Teacher may direct:

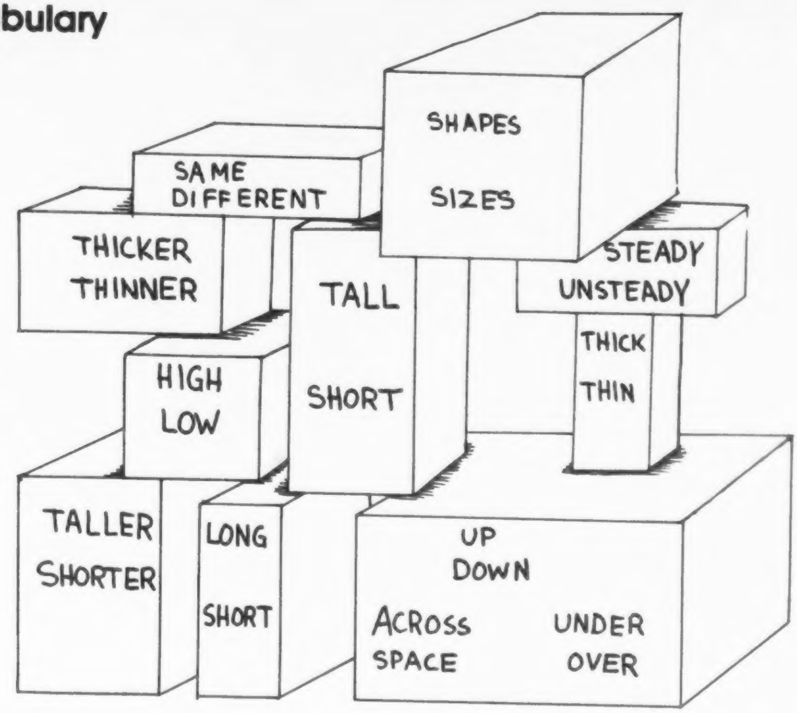
- Pick up the block.
- Move the car.

Teacher may ask:

- Is the a car or a boat? (Boat/It's a boat.)
- Who helped you build? (_________ helped me.)
- Which block is bigger?
- How many blocks did you use?

Hush Puppies

Vocabulary


SHAPES
SIZES
SAME
DIFFERENT
THICKER
THINNER
TALL
SHORT
STEADY
UNSTEADY
THICK
THIN
HIGH
LOW
TALLER
SHORTER
LONG
SHORT
UP
DOWN
ACROSS
SPACE
UNDER
OVER

Skills

- experimenting
- creating
- checking
- observing
- balancing
- naming
- classifying
- trial and error
- functioning
- measuring
- representing

MORE IDEAS

Other Activities

- Discuss building's function.
- Help select additional accessories for structure, if appropriate.
- Discuss block/size relationships, e.g., short and shorter, at an appropriate time.
- Ask children to dictate signs for their building (e.g., "This is a church" - Mary)

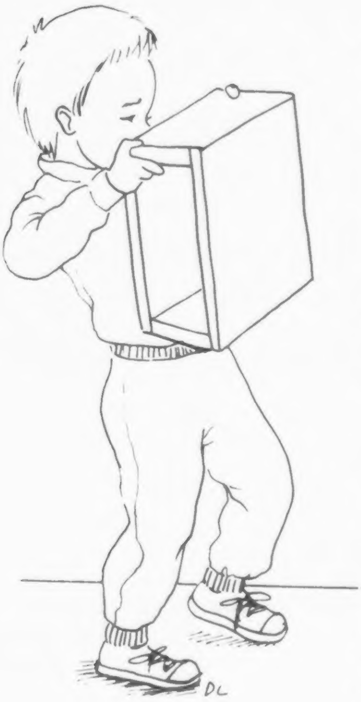
Hollow Blocks

Large hollow blocks made of wood have been a favorite in preschool and kindergarten programs for decades.

Like the smaller unit blocks, hollow blocks are mathematically proportioned (two small rectangles equal a square, and two squares equal the larger rectangle).

The size and weight of the hollow blocks satisfy children's need to use their large muscles to lift and carry, push and pull. Since only a few blocks are required to create a substantial and functional structure, children can feel an immediate sense of accomplishment. Hollow blocks encourage cooperative play, as the largest blocks are easier for two children to carry than one. Cleanup is even more fun when done by "work crews" who devise imaginative ways to transport their loads.

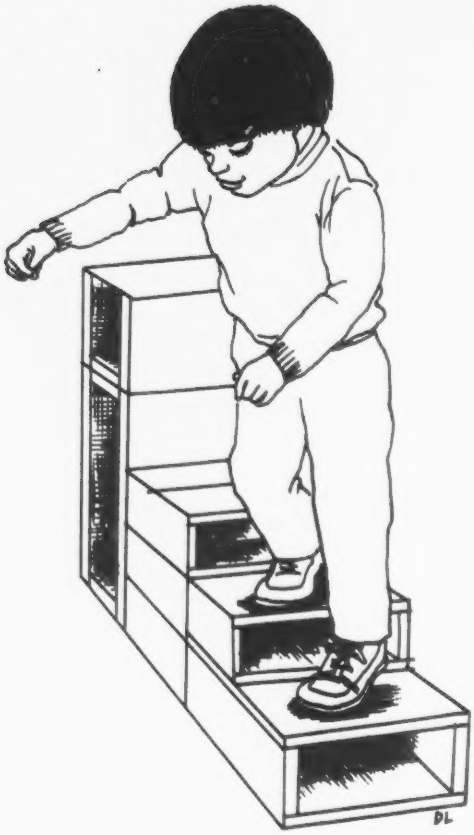
Hollow blocks are often used in conjunction with spontaneous dramatic play. The large scale invites children to construct child-sized vehicles to climb into or onto or buildings they can actually inhabit.



Four-year-olds' play themes are often fluid, held together through the continuity of characters in a constantly changing plot. Hollow block structures are easily rearranged to accommodate the needs of the moment. For example, the people from space, who have just landed from another planet, quickly convert their spacecraft into a land vehicle, then later into a boat, and so on. The family that has been shopping at the newly constructed supermarket (complete with blocks for grocery packages) may suddenly dismantle the store to create "grandma's" house, where they are going to pay a visit.

Whereas unit blocks promote play in which the child acts as "narrator" or "director," manipulating small figures who carry out the action, hollow blocks enable the child to be a participant or "actor" in the play. Many children need to first play out their ideas themselves before they can find satisfaction in the more abstract process of using the smaller scale to represent experience.

Hollow blocks are frequently used outdoors or in an indoor gym area where they are a natural complement to active play. When used in the classroom, where space is limited, it is best to keep them away from the unit blocks, because the larger blocks take up most of the space, and the unit blocks then may serve only as decoration or become small props. The hollow blocks also promote a bustle of activity, and more delicate structures are likely to topple. When hollow blocks are used near the dramatic play area, play flows back and forth naturally, as the blocks suggest props such as tables, chairs, and beds, or cars to drive and places to drive to.



Interest Area — **Cooking**

Eating together is an integral part of the prekindergarten program. During daily work/play activities, the children can help to prepare foods for snack time, and for special birthday or holiday celebrations.

Food preparation activities are important to young children because:

- Eating is a familiar experience; it provides a link with the home.
- Working with food helps children understand the connection between eating, growing, and getting big.
- As children prepare food, share it, and relate to others, they begin to feel part of the classroom community.

When children work with real implements, use real foods, and observe changes, they are exploring, manipulating, commenting, and questioning. These activities involve mathematics, science, and language learnings, and are related to art, music, and dramatic play. Additional positive experiences occur when parents or other community members assist the children in preparing and serving food.

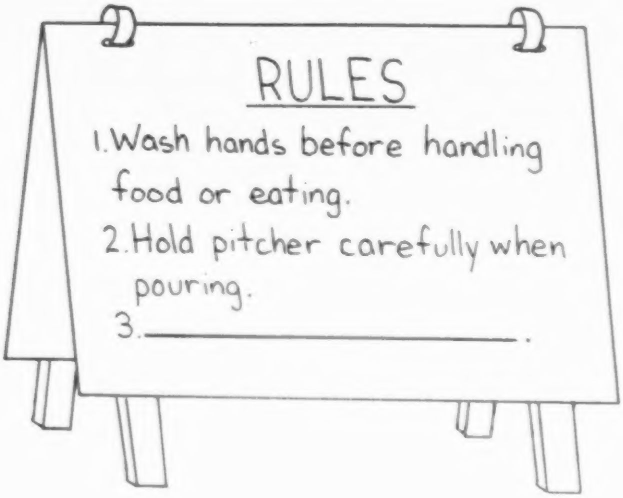
Tips

- Keep it simple.
- Introduce new materials gradually.
- Plan a food preparation and/or serving experience often.
- Early in the year, plan experiences so that each child in the group has a turn; later on, experiences are planned to include a few children at a time.
- Emphasize that food sharing is just as important as food preparation.
- Plan experiences that involve children in both preparation and cleanup.
- Decide if the food prepared will be part of the snack, and whether it will be eaten on the day it is prepared or on the next day.
- Consider the process: will each child prepare a portion to eat, or will children work together to prepare something to be shared by all?

Teacher Preparation

THINK
IT
THROUGH

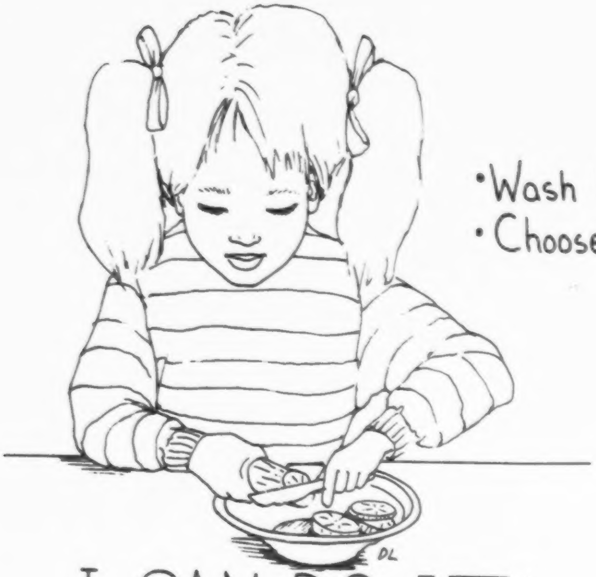
- Select basic materials and ingredients.
- Provide clean work surfaces and tools; are children's hands clean?
- Establish rules with children.
- Review each recipe for process, timing, and number of servings.
- Provide real tools.


RULES
1. Wash hands before handling food or eating.
2. Hold pitcher carefully when pouring.
3. ______.

Basic Materials

- cutting boards
- plastic or metal bowls (varied sizes)
- egg beaters - rotary and whisk
- scrapers, peelers
- scrubbers
- spreaders
- knives, scissors
- pots (varied sizes)
- griddle or large frying pan
- mixing spoons
- Gadgets from kitchen drawers are often useful in the classroom.

- Parents and other community members are helpful resources.



•Wash hands.
•Choose the right tools.

I CAN DO IT!

Exploring and Discovering

Children may:

- work individually or in small groups as they begin to share and develop relationships.
- compare colors, textures, tastes, and temperatures of various foods to develop science and language skills.
- volunteer names of familiar foods and tools.
- try new or unfamiliar foods.
- use real tools for grating, beating, stirring, mixing, chopping, scraping, cutting, slicing (develops eye-hand coordination). When used under proper supervision, real knives, egg beaters, peelers, and scrapers are safer than dull, plastic copies. They provide opportunities for children to develop increased fine motor control, as well as to learn about how simple machines and tools work.
- observe changes brought about by manipulation (peeling, stirring), or by heating, cooling, or freezing.

- verbalize their observations to develop a more precise vocabulary:

> "When we boiled an egg it got harder, but the potato we boiled got soft."
>
> "The rice we had for lunch tastes different from the rice in the rice pudding we made."

- prepare "fun" foods - instant pudding, gelatin blocks, peanut butter candy.
- prepare "from scratch" foods, such as applesauce, pudding, butter, using mathematical skills such as measuring, comparing, and estimating.
- compare raw, frozen, dried, and canned versions of the same fruit or vegetable.

Thinking Questions

Teacher might ask:

- What did we do? What happened first? And then what happened?
- Why do you think this happened?
- What would happen if we tried it again?
- Why do we need to eat food? What would happen if we didn't eat? What other things in our room need food? (plants, fish, gerbils, turtles, snails)

Focus for the LEP Child

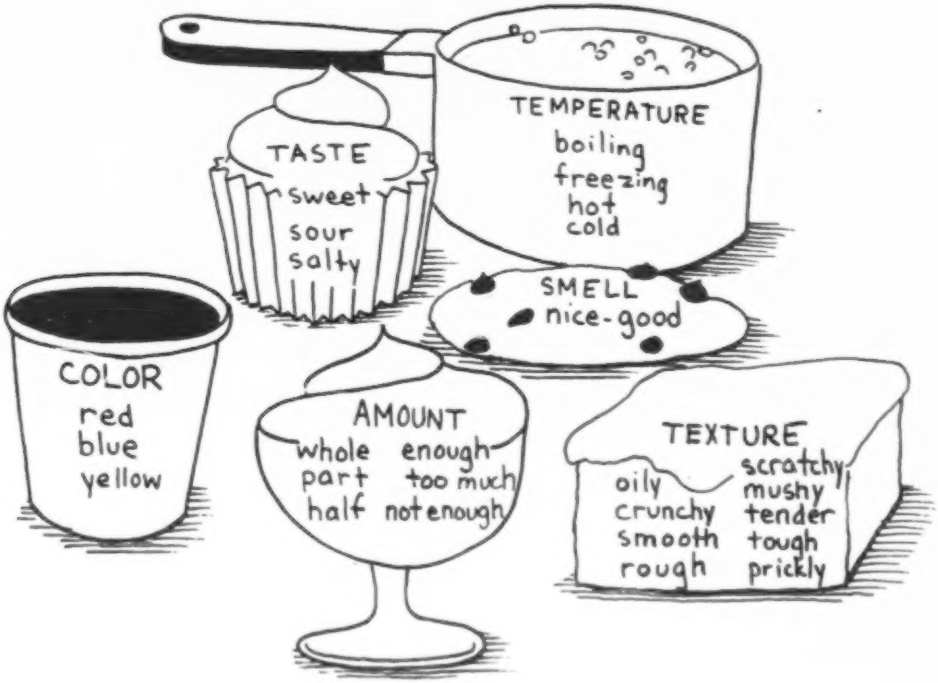
Teacher may direct:

- Carry the forks/spoons to the sink.
- Put the bowl on the table.
- Kim, hold the pan. Jose, pour the water into the pan.
- Count the cups of water we pour into the pot. One, two, three.

Teacher may ask:

- Is this hot? Is it cold?
- Do we need cups or bowls for the milk? (Cups.)
- Which do you like, rice or potatoes?

Vocabulary


TEMPERATURE
boiling
freezing
hot
cold
TASTE
sweet
sour
salty
SMELL
nice-good
COLOR
red
blue
yellow
AMOUNT
whole enough
part too much
half not enough
TEXTURE
oily scratchy
crunchy mushy
smooth tender
rough tough
prickly

Skills

- observing
- contrasting
- estimating
- predicting
- measuring
- using tools - pouring, grating, cutting, slicing, peeling, mashing
- describing
- sharing
- helping

MORE IDEAS

Other Materials

- convection or toaster oven
- popcorn popper
- two-burner hot plate
- electric mixer
- small refrigerator
- electric frypan
- orange juice squeezer

Other Activities

Children may:

- listen to stories involving food, such as:
  - The Gingerbread Man
  - The Three Bears
  - The Carrot Seed
  - The Very Hungry Caterpillar
  - Blueberries for Sale
  - Peas, Cheese and Chocolate Pudding

- enjoy poems and rhymes, such as:
  - "Animal Crackers"
  - "Mix a Pancake"
  - "Pat a Cake"
  - "Little Miss Muffett"

- learn songs, such as:
  - "Do You Know the Muffin Man?"
  - "I'm a Little Teapot"

- take class trips to:
  - bakery, supermarket, school cafeteria, pumpkin farm

- plant a garden.
- have a picnic.

Parents can:

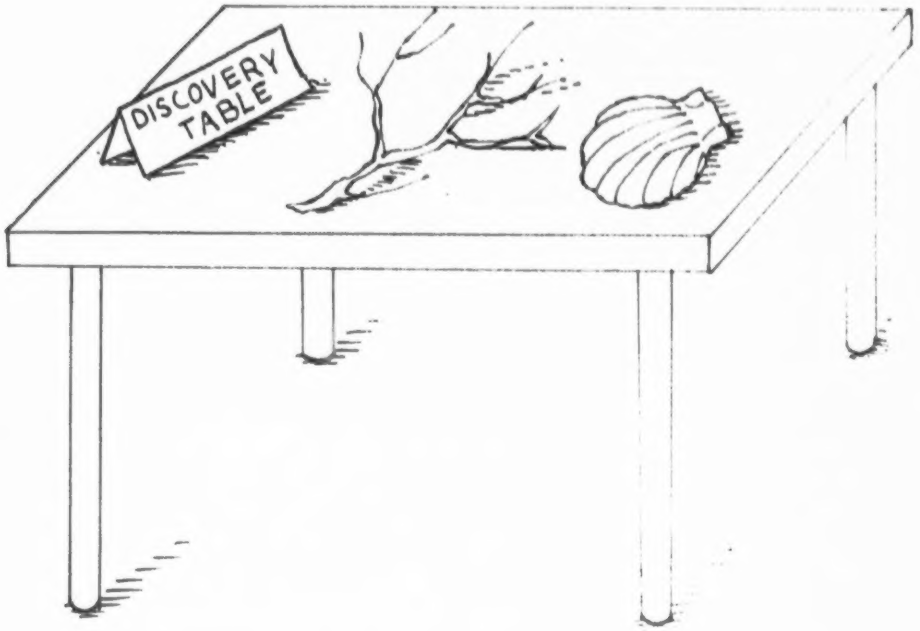
- celebrate holidays by coming into the classroom to prepare a special food.
- send food from home.
- share in food preparation.

Interest Area — **Discovery Table**

The Discovery Table should be just that - a place for discoveries. Attractive and enticing objects beckon children to examine, experiment, rearrange, poke and probe, sift and sort. Materials invite children to explore with all their senses - to feel the contrast of soft moss on rough bark, to hear the plink and plunk of pebbles dropping into a can, to watch a caterpillar munch its way through a leaf, or to sniff the fragrance of a flower.

Exciting displays encourage children to talk with each other and with staff about what they see and discover - to ask and answer questions.

The Discovery Table is a place for sharing. The teacher may share a collection of acorns and leaves from a walk in the park or worms discovered on a wet sidewalk. One child might share seashells gathered while visiting relatives in Puerto Rico or from a day at Coney Island. Another might share some sparkly rocks dug up by the workers repairing pipes in her street.



Tips

- Change displays frequently as children's interests and skills change, and as they bring in new objects to share.
- New materials/activities can be introduced at the Discovery Table and later go into other areas of the room.
- Create eye-catching displays using a variety of trays (including disposable plastic or styrofoam meat and produce trays) lined with colorful tissue or construction paper.
- Protect pictures by covering with clear contact sheets or plastic photo pockets.

Teacher Preparation

THINK IT THROUGH

- Decide how many children should work at the Discovery Table, and provide appropriate set-ups, chairs, or nearby shelf and rug space.
- Arrange materials so they suggest things to do:

NATURAL MATERIALS

- Flowers in a vase and matching pictures of flowers cut from seed catalogs, pasted on index cards.
- A tray of assorted shells, magnifying glasses, sorting containers, a book of shells, and a storybook about the beach.
- A variety of pieces of bark and twigs (perhaps two of each to suggest matching), and a book about trees.
- Pinecones of varied sizes, trays for sorting, a pine branch in water, books and pictures of evergreens.
- An assortment of loose stones, sorting containers, and a board with a few rocks glued to it that match some of the loose ones, a magnifying glass, and books about rocks.
- A bird's nest, an eggshell, feathers, and some books and pictures of birds.

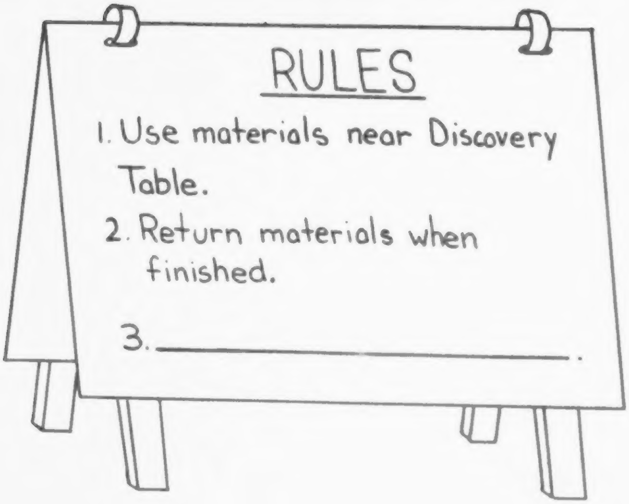
- A bowl of large seeds (e.g., five kinds of beans or several fruit pits), sorting containers, a seed-matching board (seeds glued on wood or cardboard next to pictures of the appropriate bean plant, vegetable, or fruit), books about seeds and planting.
- A tray of assorted leaves; matching leaves pressed between waxed paper or clear contact sheets.
- A frog in a terrarium, several books and pictures about frogs.

MACHINES, TOOLS, AND GADGETS

- Tools, machine parts; a set of screwdrivers and /or other appropriate tools; and books about tools and fixing things.
- Sets of gears (real and plastic toy sets) and books about machines.
- Nuts, bolts, and washers of varying diameter; several wrenches; pictures of people using tools.

COLOR AND OPTICS

- Colored transparent plastic sheets, cellophane, plastic cups, and other colored transparencies to look through; trays of color mixing set-ups (colorless plastic ice tray with sections half-filled with water; three small containers of diluted red, yellow, and blue food color, with a plastic medicine dropper in each; and white absorbent paper or paper towels to record colors created in ice-tray sections); color-matching cards; books about colors.
- A kaleidoscope; magnifying lenses (hand-held and tripod types) and reducing lenses, with an assortment of things to look at; toy binoculars.

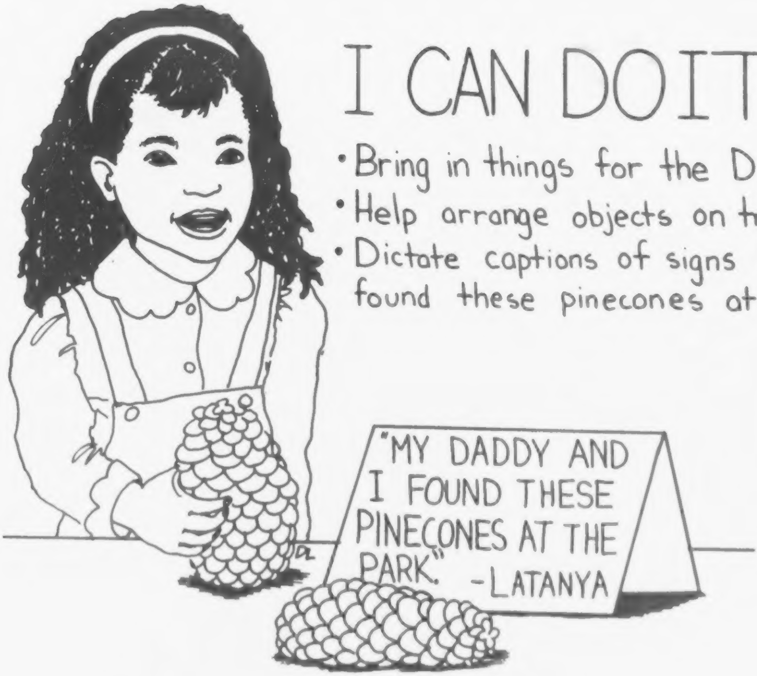


RULES

1. Use materials near Discovery Table.
2. Return materials when finished.
3. ______________________.

Basic Materials

- natural materials, e.g., rocks, shells, leaves
- man-made materials, e.g., magnets, tools, gadgets
- trays
- magnifying glasses
- sorting containers (e.g., egg cartons, muffin tins, ice trays, margarine containers)
- books and pictures


"MY DADDY AND I FOUND THESE PINECONES AT THE PARK." -LATANYA

I CAN DO IT!

- Bring in things for the Discovery Table.
- Help arrange objects on trays and in containers.
- Dictate captions of signs (e.g., "My Daddy and I found these pinecones at the park." - Latanya).

NATURAL MATERIALS

Children may:

- compare, sort, group, and arrange objects according to their own ideas.
- match pairs of objects, pairs of pictures, or objects to pictures.
- look for identifying characteristics of objects.
- look at objects under magnifying glasses.
- look up pictures of objects in books and ask teacher to read information about them.
- talk about similar things they have seen.
- talk about where and how they collected things they bring to school.

MAN-MADE MATERIALS

Children may:

- discover through experimentation with food coloring and colored transparencies how to create new colors from primary colors.
- explore magnifying lenses.
- talk about their discoveries, ask questions, and ask teacher to help them find information in books.

Thinking Questions

NATURAL MATERIALS
Teacher might ask:

- Have you ever seen shells like these on a beach?
- What kind of noise do you hear when you hold this shell to your ear?
- Can you find another shell that looks like this?
- Can you find all the smooth rocks and put them on this tray? What do you think made these beach rocks so smooth?
- Which rock do you think is heavier?
- Can you find a picture of a flower just like the one in the vase? Can you find two pictures of flowers that are the same?
- Did you ever eat beans that look like this? Were they hard like this? How do you think we could make them soft?
- Can you find a seed that looks like this on the matching board? Do you think this seed came from an orange or a peach? How could you find out?
- Which pinecone is bigger?

MAN-MADE MATERIALS
Teacher might ask:

- Which screwdriver do you think you will need to unscrew this small screw?
- Does anyone in your house use screwdrivers? What do they use them for?
- Can you tell your friend how you made this color with the food colors?
- Do you know which two colors make green?
- Can you make a design on the paper towel using your new colors?

Focus for the LEP Child

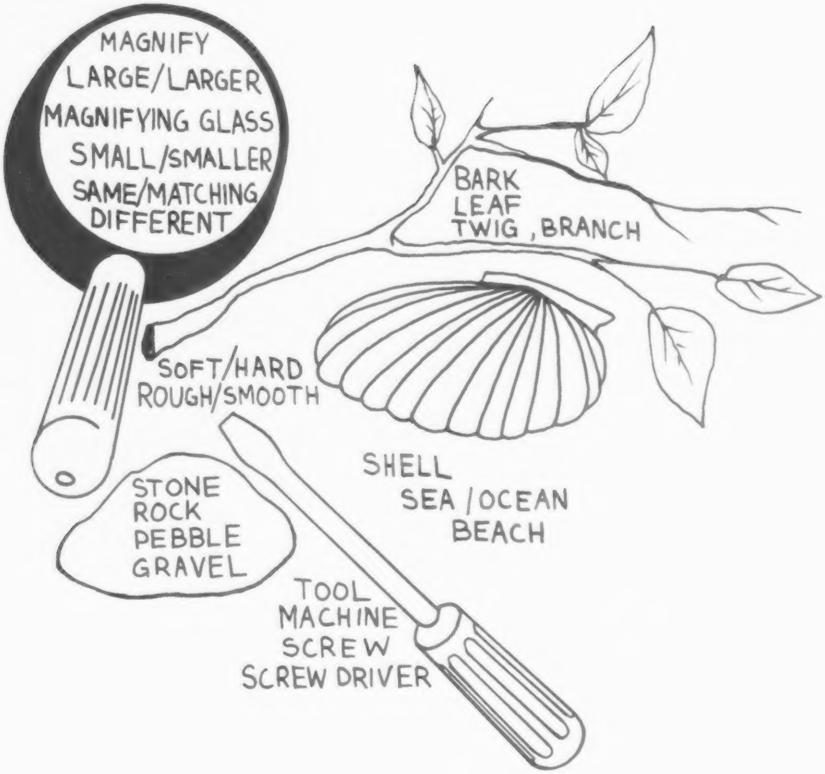
Teacher may direct:

- Put these rocks on this tray.
- Pick up the pinecones.
- Hold the big shell to your ear.
- Take the seed out of this grapefruit.

Teacher may ask:

- Which seed is bigger, the peach seed or the grapefruit seed?
- Is the rock smooth or rough?
- Does the leaf have points or is it smooth?
- Which is softer, the sponge or the wooden block?

Vocabulary


MAGNIFY
LARGE/LARGER
MAGNIFYING GLASS
SMALL/SMALLER
SAME/MATCHING
DIFFERENT
BARK
LEAF
TWIG , BRANCH
SOFT/HARD
ROUGH/SMOOTH
SHELL
SEA / OCEAN
BEACH
STONE
ROCK
PEBBLE
GRAVEL
TOOL
MACHINE
SCREW
SCREW DRIVER

Skills

- observing:
  - characteristics
  - details
  - colors
  - changes
- questioning
- comparing
- matching
- arranging
- sorting
- grouping
- describing
- relating past events
- looking for cause-and-effect relationships
- developing hypotheses
- testing ideas
- experimenting
- making inferences
- drawing conclusions

MORE IDEAS

Other Materials

- coral
- sponges
- fossils
- seed pods (locust tree pods, milkweed pods)
- insects
- aquarium with pond water

Other Activities

- Use materials from the Discovery Table for collage projects on heavy cardboard or wood scraps (leaves, twigs, bark, pinecones, acorns, seeds, shells, pebbles).
- Involve parents and children in collecting magazine and catalog pictures (e.g., pictures of animals, plants, flowers, trees, shells, beaches). Use some of these to make displays, books, and matching and sorting games. Save some for children to make their own books.

Interest Area — **Dramatic Play**

Spontaneous dramatic play emerges freely from children's imaginations. It is highly active, free flowing, often fast paced and rapidly changing. It enables children to better understand their world by allowing them to incorporate experiences and perceptions into imaginative activities.

Earliest themes for play emerge from familiar happenings in the family. They involve care and nurture of babies and young children (washing, feeding, dressing, bedtime, scolding, and cuddling) and household routines and tasks (cleaning, doing laundry, preparing meals). Gradually, themes expand to encompass related neighborhood activities, such as food shopping or going to the post office. Young children also become fascinated by the work that people do outside the home, especially the more visible jobs, such as construction, sanitation, or firefighting.

As children grow, their spontaneous dramatic play becomes richer and more complex. The more they experience, and the greater their comprehension, the more detailed and sophisticated their play.

The teacher can play an important role in enhancing this growth by providing materials for children to use in playing out, or "trying on," real-life experiences.

Such role-playing offers opportunities for developing social skills, exchanging ideas, giving and taking directions, and working out sequences. The teacher can help by suggesting a role for the shy or rejected child who doesn't quite know how to join in.

By observing children's dramatic play, teachers can discover what children understand and don't understand, and what interests the group. Teachers can then use this information as the basis for planning related experiences, such as trips, books, and discussions, that will expand and enrich children's concepts.

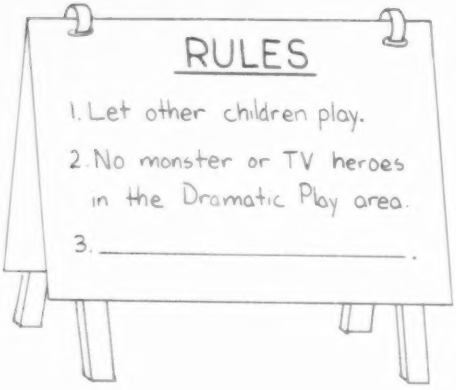
Tips

- Organize dress-up clothes and props by categories, using picture labels to designate where things go.
- Arrange dolls and stuffed animals attractively on shelves or in doll beds.
- Equipment for house play should always be available in the Dramatic Play area. Materials for expanding activities, such as store and doctor play, can be added as themes emerge.
- Include traditional clothing of cultures represented in the class.
- Put only a few things out at a time.
- Do not intrude upon children's play. Join in play when invited, or to help children refocus when necessary.
- Help children take turns with the most popular roles.

Teacher Preparation

THINK
IT
THROUGH

- Set up basic housekeeping materials in Dramatic Play area.
- Separate kitchen area from bedroom/living room areas.
- Label places for materials, using pictures or diagrams.
- Check materials and arrangement daily.
- Plan space and storage for special set-ups, such as supermarket or post office.
- Plan children's roles in creating special set-ups.
- Establish rules and routines with children.



RULES

1. Let other children play.
2. No monster or TV heroes in the Dramatic Play area.
3. ______________.

Basic Materials

- dolls representing a variety of ethnic groups (some soft, some washable)
- doll accessories: clothes, bottles, beds and bedding, doll carriage
- rocking chair
- cushions
- suitcase
- play stove, sink, and cupboard
- unbreakable dishes, cutlery, cooking utensils
- play food
- small table and chairs
- mirror (unbreakable)
- broom, mop, dustpan
- telephones
- clothesline and clothespins
- iron, ironing board
- dress-up clothes: hats, scarves, pocketbooks, briefcases, skirts, dresses, vests, jackets, ties, shoes, boots, jewelry

I CAN DO IT !

- Collect extra props to use.
- Select materials and dress-up clothes.
- Put on dress-up clothes.

Exploring and Discovering

Children may:

- pretend to prepare meals, feed people and dolls, go to restaurants, order take-out food.
- pretend to do household chores.
- pretend to make telephone calls to family, friends, doctor, grocery store.
- pretend to travel (by car, truck, bus, subway, train, taxi, boat, or plane).
- pretend to go on neighborhood errands, such as trips to the laundromat, bank, or post office.
- play out a variety of roles within the family.
- play out adult roles in the community, such as police officers and fire fighters, cashiers and delivery people, doctors, dentists, hairdressers, teachers, office workers.
- use dress-up clothes and props in their play.

Thinking Questions

Teacher might ask:

To expand vocabulary:

- Do you serve breakfast here? What do you have?
- Can I come to your house for dinner? What will you cook for dinner?

To stretch concepts:

- The supermarket just had a delivery of vegetables. Will you help us unload them and put them on the shelves?
- Where are you going in your car?
- Where will your bus stop?

To encourage problem solving:

- Doctor, I think my baby is sick. Can you examine her? What can I do to help her get well?
- Oh, dear, my baby is hungry, and we're out of milk. Can you help us?
- My car just had a flat tire. What should I do?
- The washing machine at the laundromat is broken. Can you help me call the repair service?

To include other children in play:

- Can you find some passengers to ride in your train?
- Thomas wants to visit your house. Should he call first or just ring the doorbell?

Focus for the LEP Child

Teacher may direct:

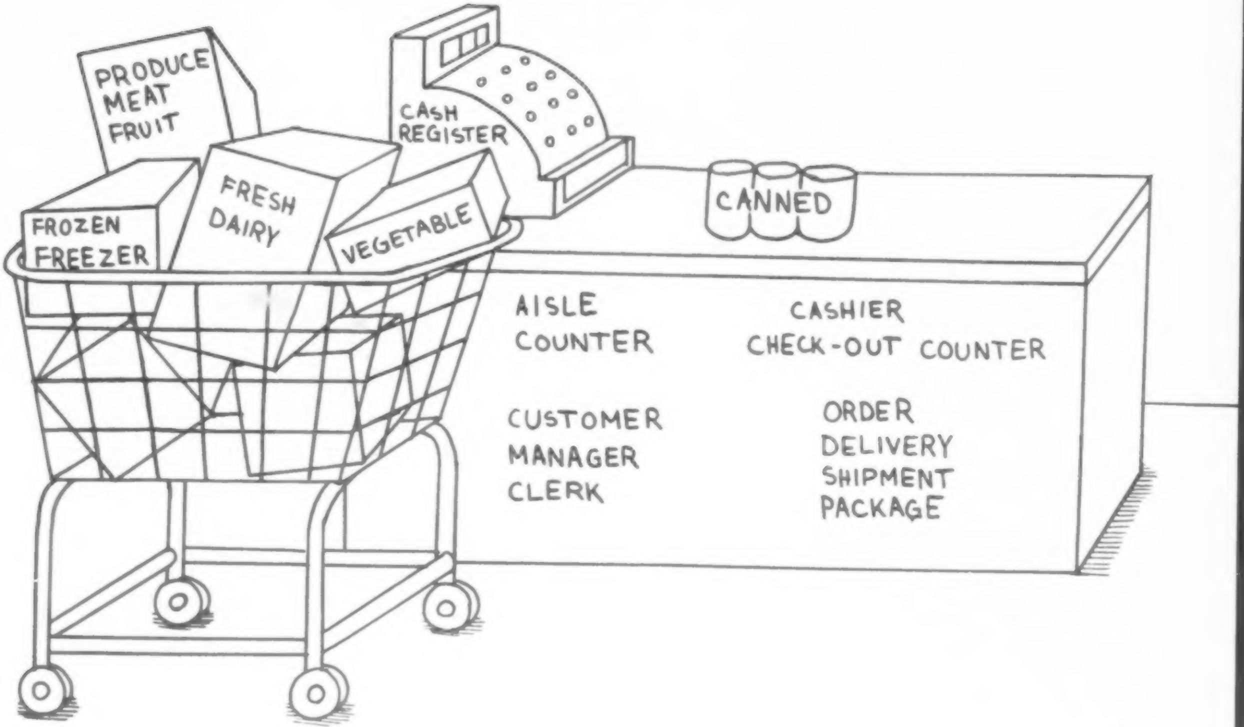
- Put on the apron/badge.
- You can be the storekeeper/police officer.
- Show me your (item).

Teacher may ask:

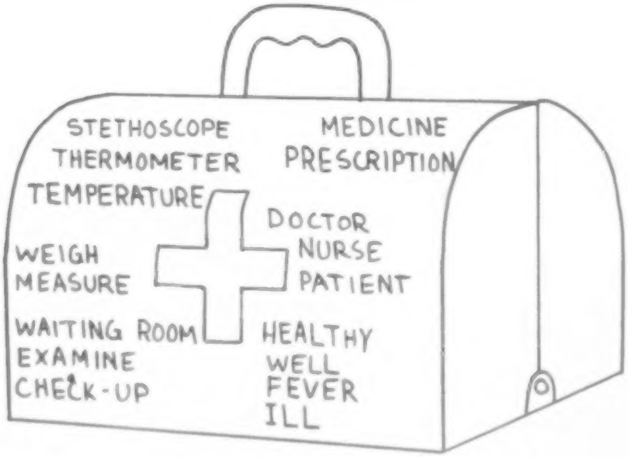
- Are you the storekeeper/customer? (Yes/No/The storekeeper.)
- Who are you? (The ____________.)
- Do you work in the store/office? (Yes/No.)
- Where do you work? (In the store.)
- Where is the milk? (Over there.)

Vocabulary (sample themes: supermarket and doctor)

Supermarket

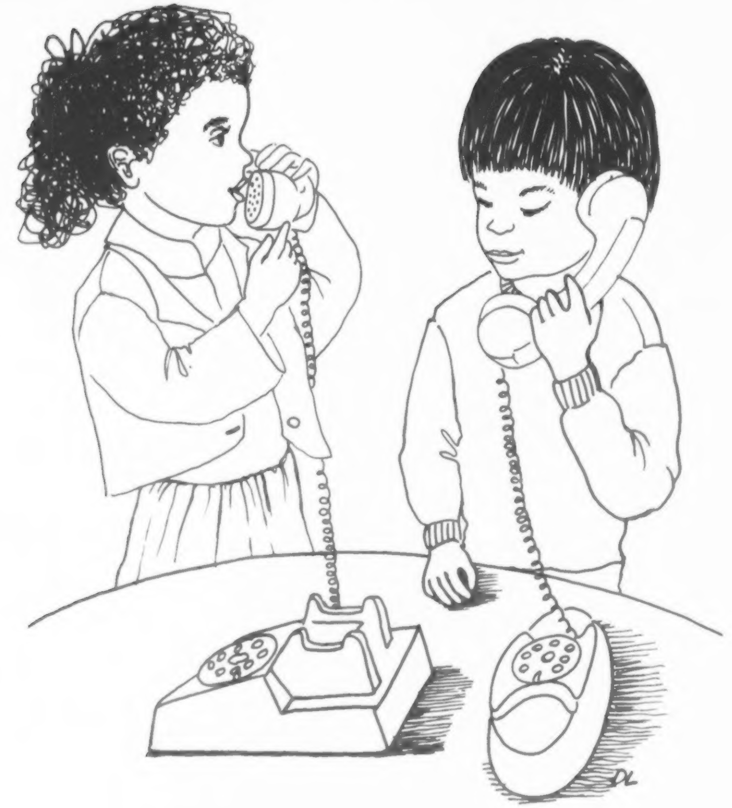

PRODUCE
MEAT
FRUIT
CASH REGISTER
FRESH DAIRY
FROZEN FREEZER
VEGETABLE
CANNED
AISLE
COUNTER
CASHIER
CHECK-OUT COUNTER
CUSTOMER
MANAGER
CLERK
ORDER
DELIVERY
SHIPMENT
PACKAGE

Doctor's Office


STETHOSCOPE
THERMOMETER
TEMPERATURE
MEDICINE
PRESCRIPTION
DOCTOR
NURSE
PATIENT
WEIGH
MEASURE
WAITING ROOM
EXAMINE
CHECK-UP
HEALTHY
WELL
FEVER
ILL

Skills

- dramatizing
- imagining
- sequencing
- symbolizing
- categorizing
- articulating
- socializing



MORE IDEAS

Other Materials

Suggested props for dramatic play themes:

Groçery/Supermarket

- tables, shelves, or crates for check-out counter and display
- empty egg cartons, food boxes, and cans; plastic fruits and vegetables
- scale to weigh produce
- aprons (for produce department)
- cash register, cash box or drawer (divided tray); play money
- small pads or roll of paper for receipts
- construction paper, scissors and tape, crayons and markers to make signs
- real signs collected from stores
- telephone, note pad, and pen or pencil
- shopping carts or baskets
- grocery and shopping bags of assorted sizes
- wagon or tricycle and cardboard cartons for delivery

Doctor's Office/Hospital

- stethoscope
- plastic medicine droppers
- tongue depressors
- empty bandage boxes
- gauze or cloth strips, tape, scissors (for bandages)
- cotton and cotton swabs
- pads of paper and pens for "prescriptions"
- dolls for "patients"
- doll beds and bedding
- old white shirts for uniforms
- tables, chairs, magazines, books, toys for waiting room

Shoe Store (or Department)

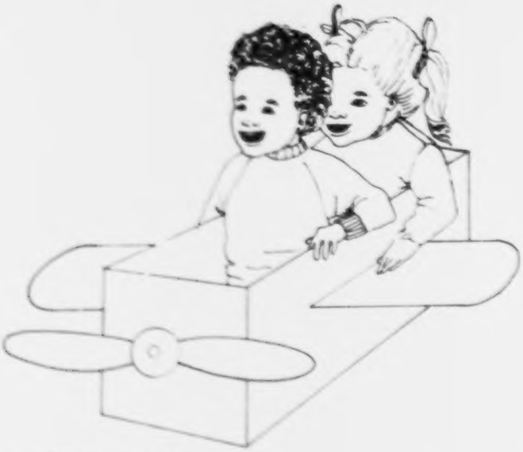
- table; cash register and play money
- pad of paper and pen or pencil for receipts
- shelves or tables for display
- old shoes and boots
- shoe boxes
- shopping bags
- chairs or benches
- low box or stool for footrest
- rulers to measure feet
- shoe horns
- mirror

Laundromat

- doll clothes and blankets; dress-up clothes
- laundry baskets
- table to fold clothes
- washer and dryer made from large cardboard cartons (cut doors in front and draw dials)
- chairs and magazines
- empty detergent boxes and bottles

Travel/Transportation

- wooden or plastic milk cases to sit in for cars, boats, planes
- chairs (for train, bus, car, and airplane seats)
- steering wheel
- keys
- tickets (save airplane tickets and folders; cut plain and colored paper for children to write their own tickets)
- table with cash register for ticket counter
- suitcases
- wagon for luggage transport



- paper punch
- dishes and trays for food service
- blankets and pillows

Other Activities

- Children may develop and set up special areas that can be left for a few days or weeks (e.g., store, laundromat, office, doctor's office or hospital, post office, hairdresser/barber shop).
- Children and parents may collect props for special areas.
- Children may:
  - go on trips.
  - listen to stories.
  - participate in discussions relating to emerging dramatic play themes.
- Additional themes for dramatic play might be:
  - clothing store
  - toy store
  - book store
  - restaurant/fast food

Picture People

I like to peek
inside a book
where all the picture people look.

I like to peek
at them and see
if they are peeking back at me.

Myra Cohn Livingston

"Picture People" from *Whispers and Other Poems* by Myra Cohn Livingston. Copyright ©1958 by Myra Cohn Livingston. Reprinted by permission of Marian Reiner for the author.

Listening to songs, poems, nursery rhymes, and stories is a natural and enjoyable activity for four-year-olds. In addition to hearing the teacher sing or read aloud, children can use the Library/ Listening Center for more of these experiences. Here they can choose their own materials, to use individually or with a friend. They can select books or records, or tapes to sing along with, "read" along with, or just for listening.

A Library/Listening Center helps children recognize correspondences between language and print, images and pictures. Their imaginations are free to travel through the pages of books whose words they are not yet able to read. Here children have the opportunity to enjoy new discoveries on the road to literacy, and to reexperience the pleasures of familiar ones.

Suggested library books:

- wordless books
- ABC books
- animal stories
- touch books
- "I can" books
- The Three Little Pigs
- Billy Goats Gruff
- Gingerbread Boy
- The Three Bears
- repetitive stories
- stories about:
  - trucks
  - children
  - families
  - toys
  - space

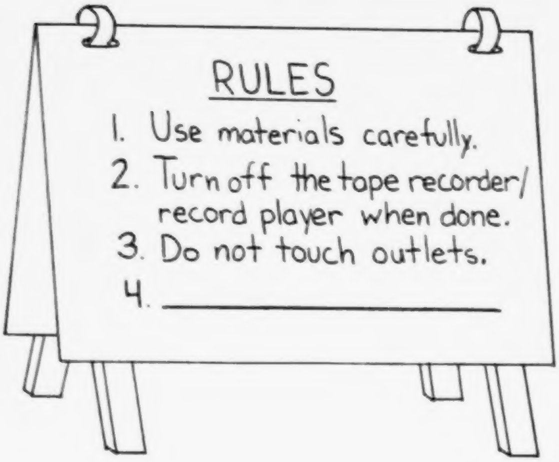
Tips

- Have multiple copies of books available.
- Never allow children to use the electrical outlets.
- Allow ample time for selecting materials, using them, and replacing them correctly.
- Introduce only a few materials at a time.
- Change the materials at regular intervals.
- Display materials appropriate to seasonal themes or children's interests.
- Maintain a checklist of Center use.
- Display pictures related to current themes or topics.
- Introduce new materials at meeting times.

Teacher Preparation

THINK IT THROUGH

- Set up rules with the children.
- Acquire sufficient material to spark and maintain interest.
- Store and organize materials on low shelves accessible to the children.
- Be sure an electrical outlet is close by.
- Use a round table and two or three chairs.
- Use pictures or color-coded labels to help children identify materials.
- Model and demonstrate the use of materials.



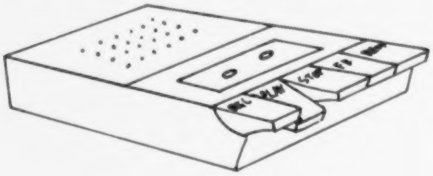
RULES

1. Use materials carefully.
2. Turn off the tape recorder/ record player when done.
3. Do not touch outlets.
4. ____________________

Basic Materials

- record player
- felt story-figures
- records
- tape recorder
- headphones
- tapes
- many and varied books
- flannel board
- mats
- cushions
- nursery-rhyme scenes

I CAN DO IT!



- Choose a tape and book.
- Insert the tape.
- Read or sing along, or just listen.
- Turn the pages when I hear a "beep".
- Stop the recorder.
- Put the materials back in place.

I CAN DO IT!

- Choose a record.
- Put the record on.
- Listen or sing along.
- Lift the arm/needle off the record.
- Stop the record player.
- Put the materials away.

I CAN
DO IT!

- Choose a book.
- Look at the pictures.
- Turn the pages.
- Tell the story.
- Put the book back on the shelf.

Exploring and Discovering

Children may:

- tell the story/recite a rhyme to another person.
- draw a picture.
- listen again.
- "read" the book with another child.
- ask questions about the story.
- play with the flannel board story-figures.

Thinking Questions

- After reading a story, teachers will want to invite the children to talk about the story. This invitation can be in the form of open-ended questions. After reading the story Harry the Dirty Dog, by Gene Zion, the teacher might ask:
  - Why do you think Harry didn't like to take a bath?
  - Do you think Harry had fun getting dirty? Why?
  - How did Harry feel when the family didn't recognize him?
- The teacher might also extend the invitation to talk about the story just by making a statement:
  - Harry certainly got dirty that day!

    This will almost surely elicit a response and give direction to the discussion.

Focus for the LEP Child

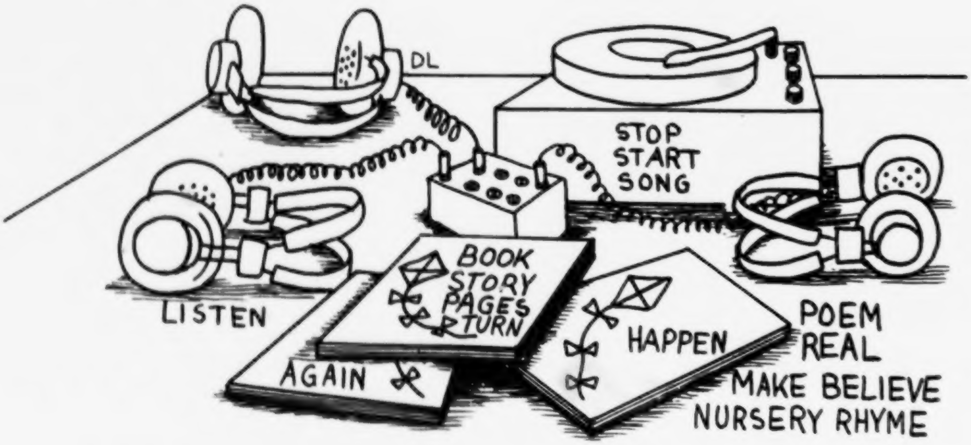
Teacher may direct:

- Put the book back on the shelf.
- Sit at the round table.
- Put the earphones on.
- Come, listen to a story!
- Show me what happens next.

Teacher may ask:

- What's the dog's name?
- How many pigs are in the story?
- Do you want to hear The Three Bears or Little Red Riding Hood?
- Did the story make you feel happy or sad?

Vocabulary


DL
STOP
START
SONG
BOOK
STORY
PAGES
TURN
LISTEN
AGAIN
HAPPEN
POEM
REAL
MAKE BELIEVE
NURSERY RHYME

Skills

- . listening
- . understanding
- . following sequence
- . remembering
- . appreciating literature
- . becoming familiar with good language usage
- . retelling
- . predicting

200

MORE IDEAS

Other Activities

Children may:

- look at books in related areas of interest.
- borrow books to take home.
- roleplay storybook characters.
- sing songs with friends.
- discuss stories at meetings.
- recite nursery rhymes.

Remember! Children with early literary experiences have taken their first steps toward becoming readers for life.

Interest Area — **Manipulatives**

Manipulative materials are small materials with which children build, play, or construct. They are most often used at a table and are sometimes called "table toys." They may also be used on the floor.

Varied and different materials should be available for children's use (easy, more difficult, open-ended, closed).

It is important to remember that children come to prekindergarten with a range of abilities, and will find different uses for the same materials. Many of these materials are self-correcting, and therefore lend themselves naturally to independent problem-solving and sharing, as well as fostering conversation. As children use these materials successfully, they begin to feel good about themselves as learners.

Manipulative materials offer children opportunities to:

. further the development of logical thinking and symbolic functioning.
. expand learnings in mathematics and science.
. develop new vocabulary and concepts.
. refine small muscle control and eye-hand coordination.
. enhance social skills.

Tips

. Cover containers with colored contact paper or plastic.

. Provide enough of each material so that two or more children can use it at the same time. Allow plenty of time for play. Observe the ways in which children use materials to determine when to bring out new ones, or old familiar ones.

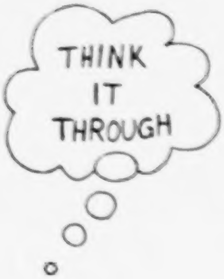
. Listen to children's comments, conversations, and questions to plan follow-up discussions and activities.

. Teach children to put materials back on the shelves when they are finished with them. This takes time. Children need reminders about putting things away before using a different material.

- Children often need the teacher's help when it's time for cleanup. If a child does not wish to help put things away, the teacher might say:
  - Can you show me where this goes?
  - I'll bring the pegs and you bring the pegboard.
  - I'll put this away for you now, and next time you'll help.

- Some activities need to be supervised more closely than others:
  - a new material
  - puzzles (in the beginning of the year) Label the backs of puzzle pieces to help facilitate cleanup. (All pieces from same puzzle may be marked with an X or other symbol.)

Teacher Preparation



- Select materials appropriate for children's ability levels.
- Place materials on low shelves or tables near work space.
- Organize materials so that they are all visible and accessible - don't stack them.
- Provide a space on the shelves for each container.
- Label storage containers or boxes with simple colors or shapes, or with pictures cut from original packages.
- Store materials in containers of appropriate size.
- Store materials in containers that children can carry easily.
- Change materials as children's skills develop and interests change.
- Types of containers suitable for storage:
  - straw or plastic baskets in different sizes
  - plastic or paper trays
  - rubber or plastic bins/tubs
  - plastic yogurt and ice cream containers
  - margarine tubs
  - tina fish and cat food cans
  - coffee cans

Basic Materials

- Lego, Duplo
- Lincoln logs
- Bristle blocks
- Tinker Toys
- Snap-and-play blocks
- table blocks
- props for table blocks (e.g., farm animals, zoo animals)
- small wooden colored cubes
- parquetry blocks
- pegboards and pegs
- lacing shapes, cards, spools, beads, and string
- sorting boxes and games
- nesting shapes
- wooden tray puzzles
- simple (4-6 pieces) jigsaw puzzles
- more difficult puzzles

I CAN DO IT !

- Go to shelf and choose a material.
- Bring the material to a table or the rug.
- Put away the material when finished, before taking something new.

Exploring and Discovering

Children may:

- build enclosures for farm animals with table blocks.
- use farm animals on a table for dramatic play.
- sort colored wooden cubes.
- make designs with parquetry blocks.
- connect Lego structures.
- fill a pegboard with pegs.
- make a necklace with wooden beads.
- use pegs from a pegboard to drop one by one into the different shaped openings of a sorting box.

Thinking Questions

The teacher looks at the child's work and asks appropriate questions, or makes statements that will clarify what the child is doing. The teacher's questions and comments should help to refine and extend the child's learnings. The teacher's conception of the child's work may be different from child's.

Teacher might say:

- Can you tell me about your design (building)?
- I notice that you put all the red cubes here, and all the yellow cubes there.
- You made a square with those blocks. Can you find something else in the room that is square?
- Can you and Taryn tell me about your Lego structures? I like the way that you both connected them. That took real cooperation.

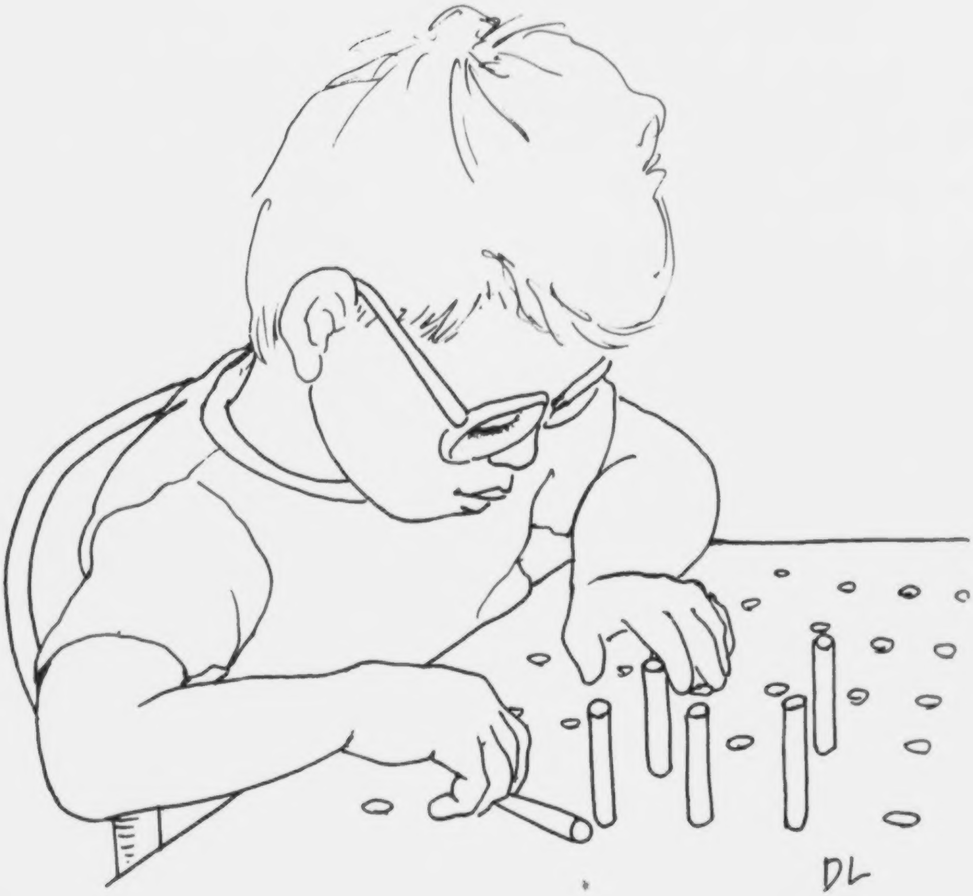
Focus for the LEP Child

Teacher may direct:

- Put the red shapes in the red box.
- Take the Lego box to the table.
- Fit these together.
- Put the beads on this string.

Teacher may ask:

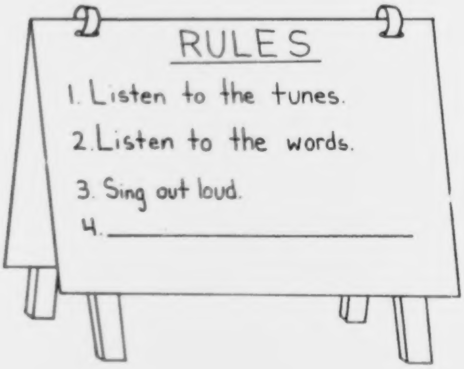
- Can you make a truck with Lego/the blocks?
- Can you do this puzzle? What is it? Is it a dog?
- Did you make this house with the blocks?
- Who worked with you? Did ___________ work with you?
- Where does the pegboard belong? Would you put it away, please?



Teacher Preparation

THINK
IT
THROUGH

- Establish rules with children.
- Encourage attentive listening habits.
- Model singing softly.
- Select favorite children's songs.
- Select simple, repetitive songs.
- Personalize songs by using children's names.
- Adapt phrases of songs to relate to classroom activities.
- Have a recorder ready to tape children's voices as they sing.



RULES

1. Listen to the tunes.
2. Listen to the words.
3. Sing out loud.
4. ______________________

Basic Materials

- songbooks, records, record player
- cassettes, tape recorder
- piano, guitar, recorder

I CAN DO IT !

- Join the music circle.
- Sing along.

Sing along
DL

Interest Area — **Music/Movement**

Four-year-olds enjoy clapping rhythms, listening to music, and singing a variety of songs. They can be heard chanting and humming spontaneously throughout the day as they work and play. The prekindergarten teacher offers children many opportunities to respond to music, move to rhythmic sounds, and play simple musical instruments. Appropriate experiences are planned to build upon their spontaneous expressions, moods, and feelings.

SONGS/CHANTS

Young children's interest in words offers many opportunities to blend language and music. Original songs, chants, and rhythms emerge from the wide variety of children's experiences and responses.

Tips

. Form a circle near the piano.

. Introduce songs with enthusiasm.

. Hum the song first to see if children recognize it.

. Encourage children to join in as soon as they can.

. Use soft musical accompaniment (guitar, piano, record).

. Sing songs over and over again.

. Alternate new songs with familiar ones.

. Alternate quiet songs with lively ones.

. Use gestures to dramatize concepts and words of songs.

Exploring and Discovering

Children may:

- Respond by clapping hands or tapping feet.
- Use rhythm instruments to accompany songs.
- Improvise on the words of familiar songs or add verses to songs.
- Suggest songs for group singing.

Thinking Questions

Teacher might ask:

- Does this song sound like any other song we know?
- How does this song make you feel?
- How can we move our bodies to this song?
- How can we change some of the words of this song?
- How can we use our voices to make this sound like a happy song? a scary song? a silly song? a sad song?

Focus for the LEP Child

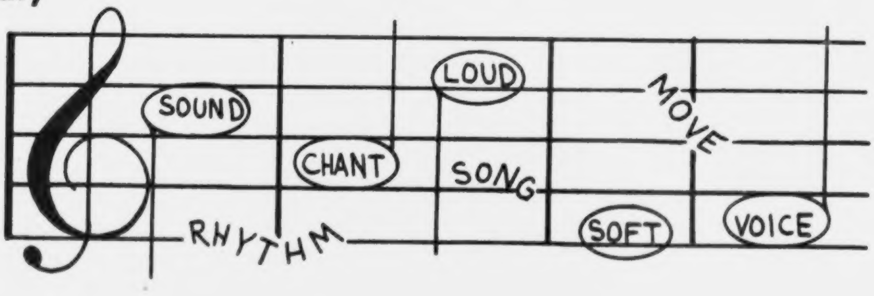
Teacher may direct:

- Come, sit by the piano.
- Tap loudly/softly with the sticks
- Take the maracas and shake them.
- Move your arms, but don't move your feet.

Teacher may ask:

- Do you like this song?
- Is this a running song or a walking song? (Running/walking. A running song/a walking song.)
- Can you sing the next part? Sing it with Michael and Kimberly.
- Does the drum make a loud sound or a soft sound? (Loud/soft. A loud sound/a soft sound.)
- Which instruments do we shake/bang? (Maracas, bells/Drums, sticks.)
- Can you play the tambourine?

Vocabulary



Skills

- listening attentively
- appreciating music
- moving rhythmically
- exploring sounds
- keeping time to music
- remembering words of songs

MORE IDEAS

Other Activities

Children may:

- enjoy the taped song in the listening corner.
- join together in small groups for singing.
- appreciate the songs of other cultures.
- relate songs to classroom activities.

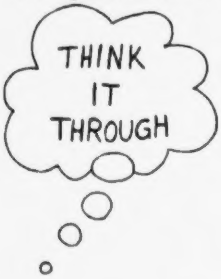
RHYTHM INSTRUMENTS/SOUNDMAKERS

Musical instruments are of great interest to young children. By listening as they play, rejecting or repeating particular tones and rhythms, children learn to differentiate between the sounds various instruments make. They discover that sounds can be made in many ways with many different objects. Four-year-olds become composers when they put these sounds together in an order all their own. New forms of expression are developed as children explore, investigate, and use instruments naturally in the prekindergarten classroom.

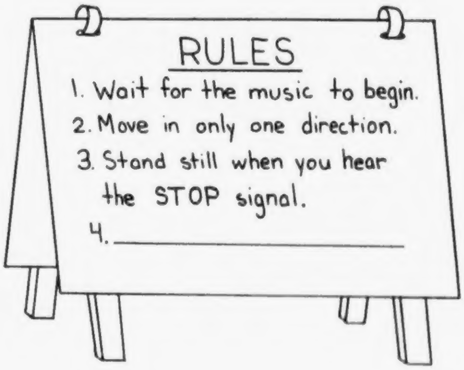
Tips

- Use simple rhythm instruments.
- Introduce musical instruments one at a time.
- Introduce musical instruments gradually.
- Talk about each instrument's shape, name, and sound.
- Place instruments where they are easily accessible to the children.
- Store similar instruments together.
- Use instruments in group situations: accompanying songs, marching, making music together.
- Encourage children to experiment individually with instruments during work/play time.

Teacher Preparation



- Establish rules and routines with children.
- Place instruments on hooks in a special area.
- Select simple rhythm instruments.
- Plan a time for introduction of each instrument.
- Plan for a wide variety of simple activities.



RULES

1. Wait for the music to begin.
2. Move in only one direction.
3. Stand still when you hear the STOP signal.
4. ____________________

Basic Materials

- bells
- drums
- sandblocks
- rhythm sticks
- tambourines
- cymbals
- ankle bells
- triangles
- shakers
- maracas
- castanets
- clappers

I CAN DO IT!

- Choose an instrument.
- Make soft and loud sounds.
- Make fast and slow sounds.
- Play a tune.
- Put the instrument back in its place.

Exploring and Discovering

Children may:

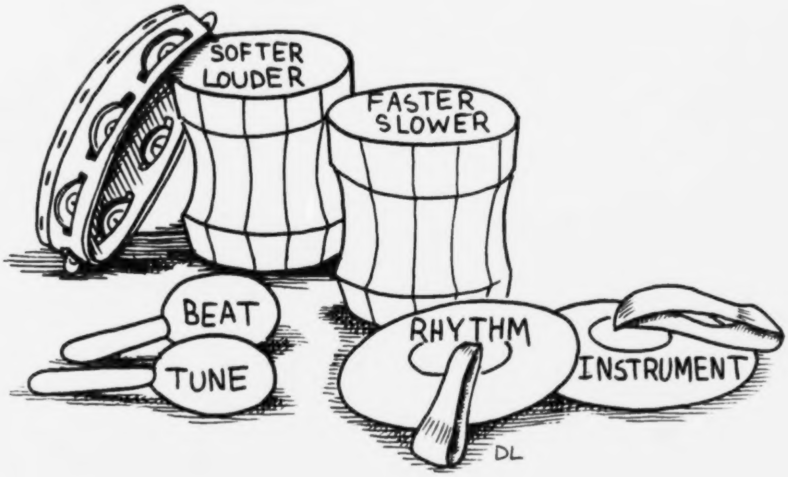
- . clap hands or tap feet to rhythmic sounds.
- . march to the beat of the drum or tambourine.
- . explore the sounds of different instruments.
- . join together for music making.
- . guess which instrument is being played.
- . imitate instrumental sounds with voices.
- . echo rhythms played by others.
- . experiment with tone and tempo.
- . find out that shaking, blowing, scraping, plucking, and striking create musical sounds.

Thinking Questions

Teacher might ask:

- How can we make musical sounds?
- What kind of sound does this instrument make?
- Which instrument makes a loud sound? a soft sound?
- How can we change the sound an instrument makes?
- Is there another instrument that makes a sound like this one?
- How can we move our bodies to the sound the instruments make?
- Can you think of a time when we might want to play this instrument again?

Vocabulary



Skills

- . discriminating between sounds instruments make
- . identifying high/low sounds; soft/loud sounds
- . distinguishing between fast and slow rhythms
- . exploring instruments
- . discovering ways to make musical sounds
- . echoing rhythmic patterns

MORE IDEAS

Other Activities

- Construct and use instruments from environmental materials: tubes, plastic containers, straws, rubber bands, shoe boxes, rocks, pebbles, tin cans, corrugated boxes, chopsticks, sand, shells.
- Use rhythm instruments for special effects when telling stories.
- March with a rhythm band.
- Divide class into groups having similar instruments for an orchestra time.
- Compose original tunes with instruments.
- Encourage children to choreograph movements to the sounds instruments make.

RHYTHMIC MOVEMENT/DRAMATIZATION

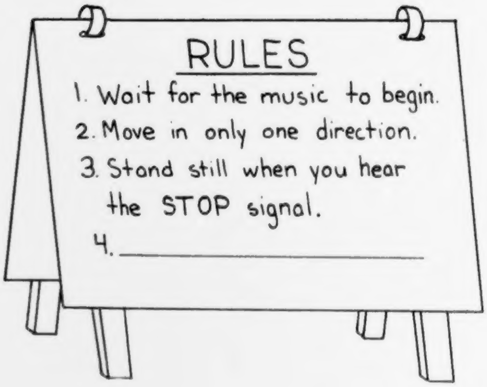
Tips

- Allow children ample space in which to move.
- Provide enough time for release of creative energies.
- Establish verbal signals for starting and stopping movement.
- Establish safety awareness by cautioning children to move in the same direction.
- Have children change direction at intervals.
- Provide a variety of rhythmic experiences.
- If space is limited, a group of children may accompany the others with instruments.

Teacher Preparation

THINK
IT
THROUGH

- Establish rules and routines with children.
- Select appropriate recorded music or rhythm instruments.
- Consider the space to be used.
- Provide simple props.
- Watch for spontaneous rhythms produced by children as they work/play, such as pounding clay or building with blocks. Expand upon these responses and enrich them.



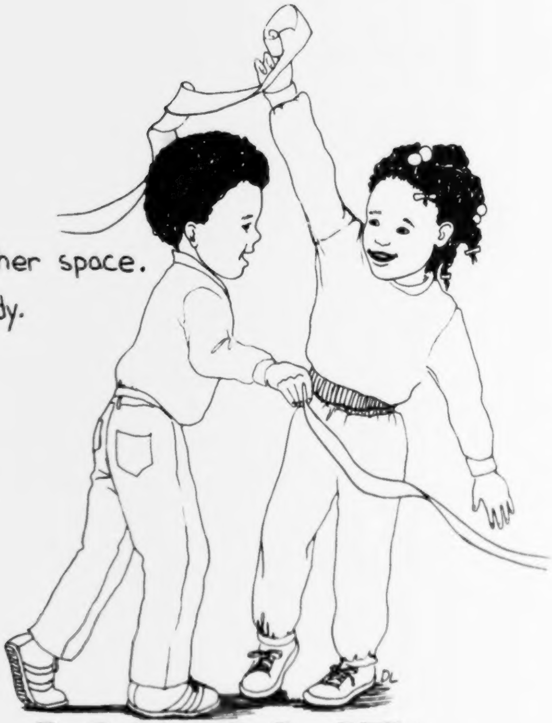
RULES

1. Wait for the music to begin.
2. Move in only one direction.
3. Stand still when you hear the STOP signal.
4. ____________________

Basic Materials

- records, rhythm instruments
- props: paper streamers, scarves, hats, ribbons, crepe paper

- Move to the music.
- Move from one space to another space.
- Use different parts of my body.



I CAN DO IT!

Exploring and Discovering

Children may:

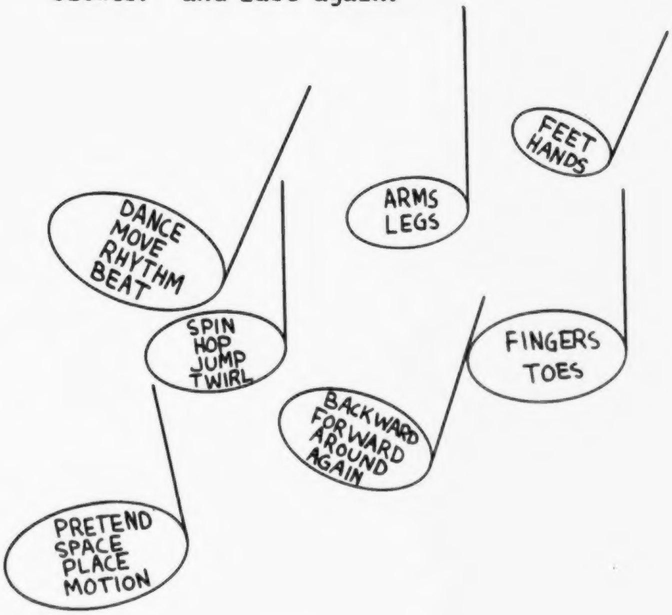
- freely express their feelings about music.
- dramatize nursery rhymes and stories with movement.
- use simple props for dramatization.
- accompany movements with rhythm instruments.
- develop patterns for rhythmic movements: (Walk forward, walk backward, clap 1, 2, 3. Run, run run; jump, jump, jump; run, run, run; jump, jump, jump).
- explore different ways to move their hands, fingers, arms, feet, legs, torsos.
- pretend they are butterflies, clowns, airplanes, locomotives, turtles.

Thinking Questions

Teacher might ask:

- How would you move if you were a sailboat in a rough wind?
- How would you move if you were a cloud in the sky?
- How could we move if we were flowers opening our petals?
- How would a happy person walk? a sad person? an elephant? a cat?
- Can you move your arms and still stay in the same place?
- Can you move with a friend?
- How can we move faster? slower? still slower? and fast again?

Vocabulary


DANCE MOVE RHYTHM BEAT
SPIN HOP JUMP TWIRL
PRETEND SPACE PLACE MOTION
BACKWARD FORWARD AROUND AGAIN
ARMS LEGS
FEET HANDS
FINGERS TOES

Skills

- developing self-awareness
- developing gross motor skills
- becoming aware of tempo and rhythm
- finding out about movement in space
- experimenting with rhythmic patterns
- expressing moods and feelings
- dramatizing with dance

MORE IDEAS

Other Activities

Children may:

- respond to sensory stimulation, such as the sound of bells or the sound of sirens from a fire engine.
- be asked: Can your body move to no sound at all, or to a sound that is only in your mind?
- move slowly, then quickly; forwards, then backwards; change levels as they march; skip and clap at the same time; make small movements and then larger ones.
- chant to accompany rhythmic movements.

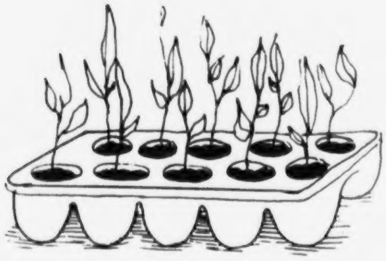
Interest Area — **Plants**

Children's interest in themselves is a natural starting point for learning about other living things. Children can begin by making comparisons between themselves and various animals and plants. From there, they can go on to look for similarities and differences among other living things.

Living things are especially appropriate in the prekindergarten curriculum. Four-year-olds are intensely interested in their own bodies - in their processes, the functions of different parts, what can happen to them (injury and illness), how they heal, and, perhaps most fascinating of all, how they grow.

Prekindergarten children are ready and eager to take on responsibility for the care of living things. They should have many opportunities throughout the year to plant and care for a variety of plant life.

Young children are excited by the mystery and suspense of "hiding" a seed down in the darkness of the soil and waiting for the new plant to push its way up to the light. They are fascinated as the plant begins to grow almost before their eyes. Children often take on a nuturing role with the "baby" plant and, at the same time, they identify with the plant's growing strength and stature.



Tips

- Experiment with seeds and cuttings before trying these activities with children.
- When planting with children, avoid feelings of disappointment or failure when plants don't sprout:
  - plant seeds in communal containers;
  - do not put children's names on individual containers;
  - make sure each child plants several seeds in different containers.
- Use found materials as containers for seedlings and plants (e.g., egg cartons, yogurt containers, styrofoam cups). Be sure to punch drainage holes in bottoms. Instead of saucers, plants can be set on cookie sheets, trays, plastic trays from fruits and meats, or plastic lids from take-out containers.
- To keep plants from drying out over weekends or holidays, cover with clear plastic to create a greenhouse effect, and place in bright but indirect light.
- To make sure children don't overwater plants, give them a pre-measured amount, or have them use medicine droppers, teaspoons, or spray bottles that will regulate the process.

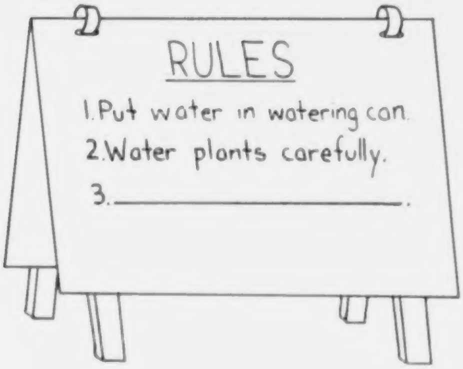
Teacher Preparation

THINK
IT
THROUGH

- Read about plants.
- Visit plant stores and botanical gardens.
- Obtain lists of toxic plants.
- Collect seeds and cuttings which germinate quickly.
- Purchase seeds, bulbs, and seedlings.
- Collect pictures and picture books about plants and planting.
- Plan classroom space near light source.
- Collect or purchase equipment.

- Plan for children's roles in planting and plant care.

- Establish safety measures and rules.


RULES
1.Put water in watering can.
2.Water plants carefully.
3.______.

Basic Materials

- plants
- plant cuttings
- seeds
- bulbs (e.g., paper white narcissus)
- pots or other containers, saucers and trays
- soil and water
- watering can

I CAN DO IT !

- Bring in seeds and cuttings.
- Bring in pictures of plants.
- Plant seeds and cuttings.
- Water plants.

Exploring and Discovering

Children may:

- cut open fruits and vegetables to find and save seeds.
- count seeds in fruits and vegetables.
- compare shapes and textures of seeds.
- bring in seeds and cuttings to plant.

- sprout seeds (e.g., lima beans, radishes) on damp cotton, sponges, or paper towels to observe the growth process.
- grow things in water (avocado, sweet potato, coleus cuttings).
- compare shapes and textures of leaves.
- identify parts of plants (seeds, roots, stems, leaves, flowers).
- care for plants.
- chart plant growth.
- look at and listen to books about plants.
- "harvest" crops, such as lettuce or alfafa sprouts.

Thinking Questions

Teacher might ask:

- Do roots grow up or down? what about stems?
- How many leaves are on this stem?
- Can you find another plant that has the same kind of leaves as this one?
- Which plant has bigger leaves?
- Which parts of these plants do we eat? (lettuce, carrot, lima bean, corn, celery)

Focus for the LEP Child

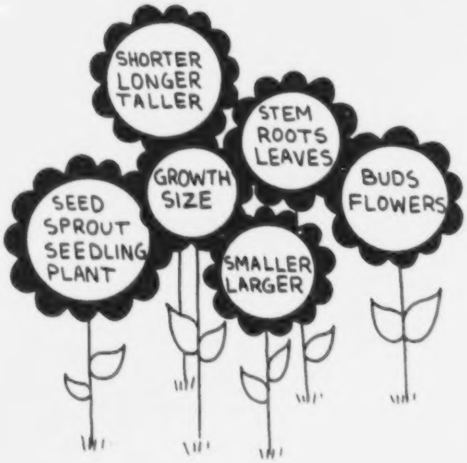
Teacher may direct:

- Put the seeds in the dirt.
- Fill the watering can with water.
- Cut the apple open.

Teacher may ask:

- Which plant is taller? (This one.)
- What color is the leaf? (Green/Yellow/Red.)
- How many seeds are inside?

Vocabulary


SHORTER
LONGER
TALLER
STEM
ROOTS
LEAVES
GROWTH
SIZE
BUDS
FLOWERS
SEED
SPROUT
SEEDLING
PLANT
SMALLER
LARGER

Skills

- observing
- comparing
- matching
- grouping
- counting
- measuring
- describing
- eye-hand coordination

MORE IDEAS

Other Materials

Children may:

- collect leaves to display and use in art projects.
- collect seeds for collages or mosaics.
- make seed charts by gluing seeds next to appropriate pictures of flowers, fruits, and vegetables cut from magazines and seed catalogs.
- walk around the school and neighborhood looking for seeds in the fall and buds in the spring.
- play matching or Lotto games with leaf shapes (using shapes cut from paper or real leaves preserved between sheets of waxed paper or clear contact paper).
- plant paper white narcissus in pebbles and keep in a cool dark place for four weeks - measure height and, when 4" tall, put them in a light, sunny window.
- measure and compare plant heights using lengths of string, ribbon, yarn, or strips of paper, and help make growth charts by gluing these to oaktag.
- "plant" carrot tops in gravel with water to observe foliage growth.
- plant lettuce in a window box, and harvest a little at a time to taste or to feed pets.
- use grass seed to plant a miniature "lawn" on a cookie sheet or shallow take-out container.
- sprout seeds in a jar, and taste sprouts (mung beans, alfalfa, radish).
- identify, taste, and plant seeds we eat as food (e.g., peanuts, corn, beans, peas).

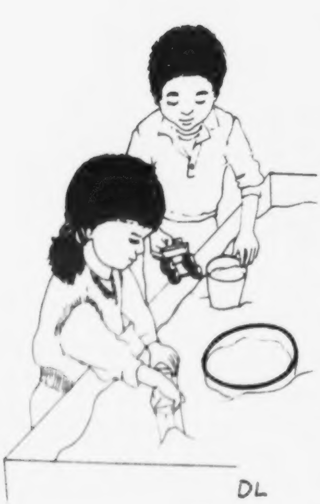
Interest Area — **Sand**

It has become increasingly important that today's child, so often living in a world of brick and plastic and concrete, have opportunities to explore the stuff of the world--water, sand, clay, and dirt. When natural materials are brought into the classroom, children have an opportunity to handle them, work with them, and observe their properties.

Sand is versatile. When dry, it is fluid. It can be scooped up in abundant handfuls, then dribbled out between the fingers. When damp, it can be molded and shaped like any other plastic medium.

Experience with sand is related to discoveries essential to mathematics and science learnings. Children create their own challenges as they use the same sand over and over each day. They strengthen communication skills as they talk, share, observe, plan, and question.

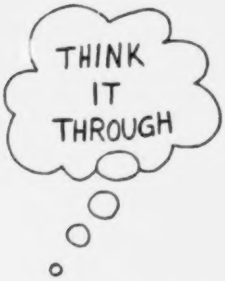
Tips



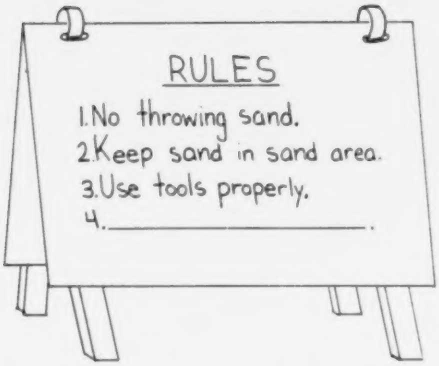
- Decide how to provide sand: box on floor, table with removable cover, or plastic trays.
- Replenish sand each day - it should be at least three or four inches deep.
- Limit the number of children working in the area; allow one child for each side of the table. (Sets of footprints placed on the floor will help guide children.)
- Store sand accessories near sand area.
- Recognize that exploration is part of the experience.
- Change accessories in response to children's work.
- Recognize that clean-up is part of the activity.

Teacher Preparation

- Order sand. Place in box or tray.
- Work with children to establish rules.
- Protect floor or table with plastic or newspaper.
- Provide smocks near area.



- Organize materials so children can find what they need.
- Change materials and/or texture of sand.
- Plan cleanup and storage of materials.
- Observe children at work and converse with them. Record, question, redirect.
- Select basic materials scaled to the amount of sand. Make additional materials, e.g., cardboard scoop, funnel.


RULES
1. No throwing sand.
2. Keep sand in sand area.
3. Use tools properly.
4. ________.

Basic Materials

- large container for sand (table with cover, galvanized tub, wading pool)
- sand
- sifter, funnel, strainers, sieves
- short-handled plastic, wooden, or metal scoops and spoons
- plastic containers of varied shapes, sizes, and volume - some with both ends cut out
- aluminum pie plates, cake pans, muffin tins; plastic or metal cups, plates, bowls; plastic or metal spoons, spatulas
- cleanup materials (mop, broom, brush, dustpan)

Note: Many appropriate materials can be collected from kitchen cupboards or purchased at garage sales, block parties, or discount stores. Others can be made by teachers and children.

I CAN DO IT !

- Put on smock or apron.
- Choose equipment and accessories.
- Clean up any spills.

Exploring and Discovering

Children may:

- explore how dry sand feels as they scoop it up, dribble it between their fingers, mold and shape damp sand.
- fill containers of different size, shape, and volume, including standard measures and containers that have a definite relation to one another.
- make patterns and imprints using hands, sand rakes, or other accessories.
- spread, poke, pat, dig, cover, and uncover.
- using damp sand, mold "cakes," "muffins," road, bridges.
- sift, sieve, strain, and pour through funnels.
- direct the flow of dry sand with funnels, split bamboo, or rigid plastic tubing.
- observe what happens when dry sand is dampened.
- predict what will happen when two small containers are emptied into a larger container; when dry sand is poured into a container with holes punched in the bottom or at various points on the side.

Thinking Questions

Teacher might ask:

- How does dry sand feel? How does damp sand feel?
- What can you do with dry sand? What can you do if the sand is damp?

- What could you use to fill your pail? How could you fill it faster?
- What could you use to dig with?
- How many times do you have to fill this little cup to fill this larger cup to the top?
- How tall a castle can you build with dry sand? with damp sand?
- What could you use to make a print or design in the sand?
- How can you make sure the sand piles up just where you want it to?
- How can you move the sand from one place to another?
- How could you make a road, a bridge, a tunnel?
- What do you think will happen if you dump the sand from this flat dish into this tall cup?
- How high can you fill this can with a hole in its side?

Focus for the LEP Child

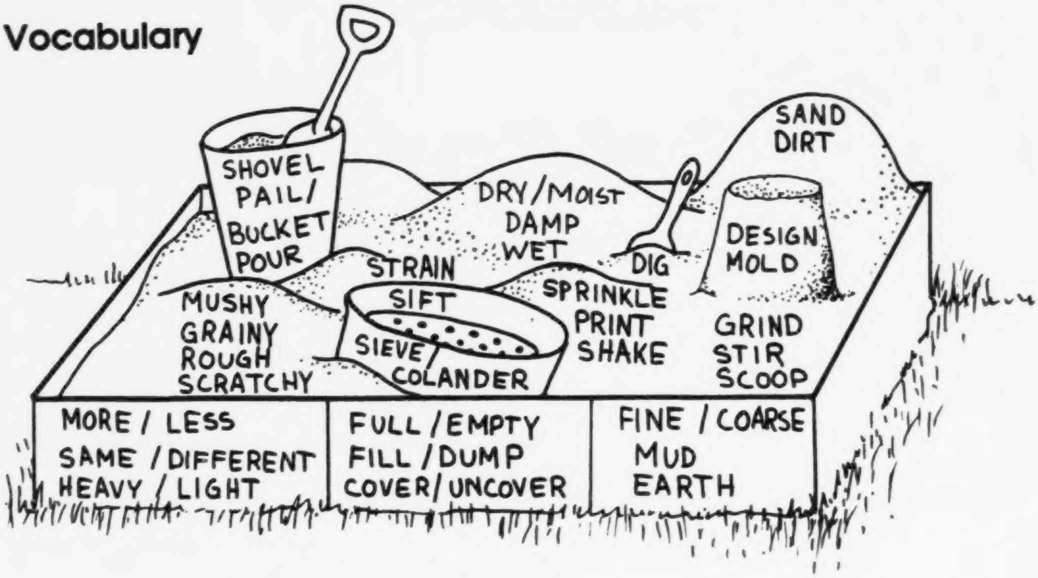
Teacher may direct:

- Sweep up the sand with this brush.
- Pour the water while Maria holds the funnel.
- Scoop the sand into this pail.

Teacher may ask:

- Can you make a tunnel?
- What are you digging with?
- How high can you pile the sand?
- What can you put in the road?
- Is this a castle or a house?

Vocabulary


SHOVEL
PAIL/
BUCKET
POUR
SAND
DIRT
DRY/MOIST
DAMP
WET
DIG
DESIGN
MOLD
STRAIN
SIFT
SPRINKLE
PRINT
SHAKE
MUSHY
GRAINY
ROUGH
SCRATCHY
SIEVE/
COLANDER
GRIND
STIR
SCOOP
MORE / LESS
SAME / DIFFERENT
HEAVY / LIGHT
FULL / EMPTY
FILL / DUMP
COVER/UNCOVER
FINE / COARSE
MUD
EARTH

Skills

- comparing
- observing
- predicting
- estimating
- sorting
- arranging
- balancing
- measuring
- experimenting
- checking
- counting
- weighing
- questioning
- describing

MORE IDEAS

Other Materials

- dump trucks, bulldozers, cars, trucks
- magnifiers
- stones, pebbles
- twigs, sticks, leaves
- bottle caps
- styrofoam bits
- coarse sand
- sand of varied colors
- marbles
- shells
- garden tools
- rakes
- homemade equipment made from plastic containers: scoops from containers with handles; molds from juice containers open at both ends; sieves made by poking holes in plastic containers with a large nail.

Other Activities

Children can:

- use sieves and sifters to separate coarse from finer sand, styrofoam bits from sand, or pebbles from sand.
- examine sand under magnifier.
- work with adults to create additional apparatus to meet special needs.

Interest Area — **Water**

A four-year-old's natural delight with water in all its forms makes it a wonderful classroom resource. Water play develops sensory perception and motor skills, allows for mathematics and science discoveries, and provides opportunities for social interaction.

Exploration allows children to see, with their own eyes, that containers of different shapes can hold the same amount, or that water always seeks its own level. Mathematical and scientific words are not needed at this point. When the child is older, these concrete experiences will give real meaning to such terms as volume, capacity, suction, vacuum, pressure.

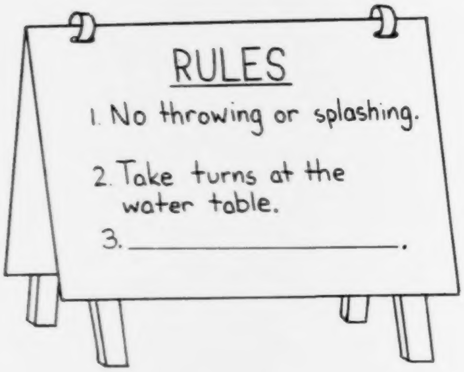
Tips

- Avoid overcrowding.
- Provide enough materials.
- Have children practice with clear water and straws, to be sure that they will blow "out" and not drink up the water.
- Allow plenty of time for exploration.
- Observe and listen; use children's questions and discoveries to plan follow-up discussions.
- Encourage children to do their own preparation and cleanup as soon as they are ready.
- A table full of water can be overstimulating. It can also provoke conflicts, as one child's equipment floats into another's "territory." At the beginning of the year, it is helpful to provide individual dishpans for each child, either in the water table or on a low table.
- For bubble blowing, use individual disposable straws and cups, and wash bowls or pans after each use.
- Help children wait for turns by printing their names on a list nearby. As children finish, have them call the next children for their turns.

Teacher Preparation

THINK
IT
THROUGH

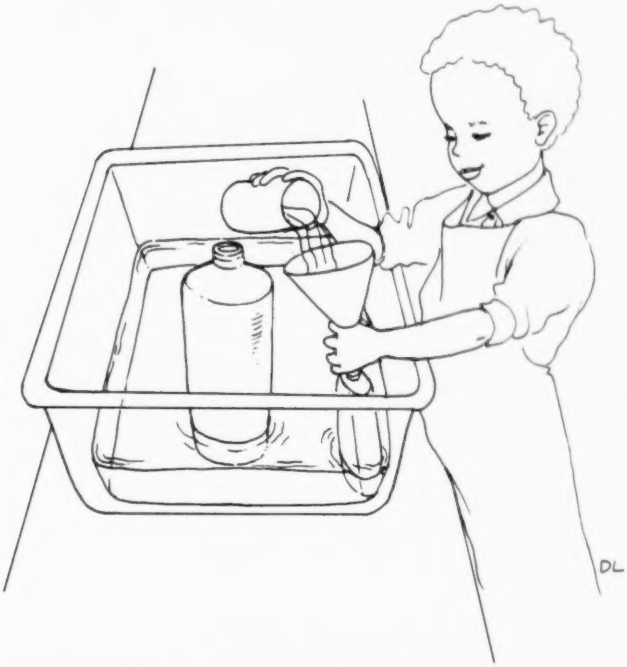
- Establish rules with children.
- Try out some activities ahead of time.
- Select basic materials.
- Protect floor or table.
- Have smocks ready.
- Put water in table or dishpans.
- Organize materials for children's easy access.


RULES
1. No throwing or splashing.
2. Take turns at the water table.
3. ____________.

Basic Materials

- water
- large container such as water table or several smaller containers such as dishpans or baby tubs
- plastic bottles
- boats
- spoons
- scoops
- sponges
- basters
- washable dolls
- liquid soap
- egg beaters
- plastic dishes
- pitchers and containers
- measuring spoons and cups
- plastic tubing, rigid and flexible

I CAN DO IT!



- Put on a smock.
- Help fill pan with water.
- Help set up materials.
- Clean up spills.

Exploring and Discovering

Children may:

- . fill containers in different ways, using squeeze bottles, spoons, cups, pitchers, droppers, funnels, plastic tubing.
- . use containers of different sizes, with narrow or wide openings.
- . drop objects into water, and compare the splashes, waves, and ripples.
- . blow softly on water, then harder, to see what happens.
- . wash a rubber doll with sponge and small bar of soap.
- . add liquid soap and make bubbles, using such materials as basters, sponges, eggbeaters, straws, funnels.
- . use boats and other water toys; see which float or sink.
- . add food coloring to water.

Thinking Questions

Teacher might ask:

- How does a dry sponge feel? What happens when you put it into water?
- Is it easier to pour from a container with a narrow opening or a wide opening?

- How many cups of water do you think you will need to fill this container?
- What do you think will happen when you pour blue water into the yellow water?
- Which of these things do you think will float?
- Why do you think your boat sank?
- How could you make a rock float?
- How can you make a bigger bubble?

Focus for the LEP Child

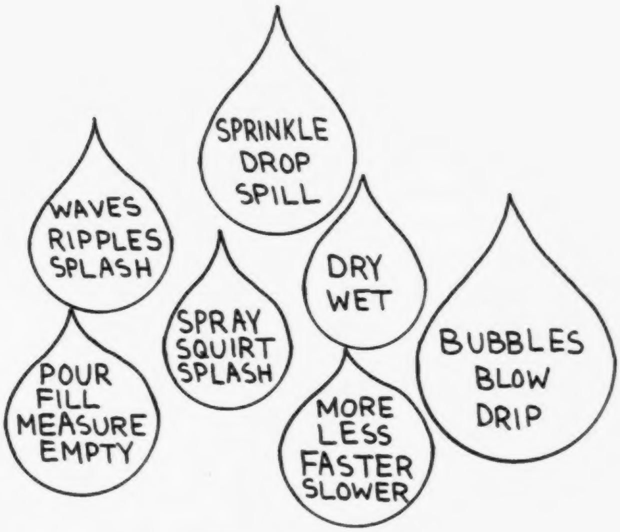
Teacher may direct:

- Pour the water into the __________.
- Put your boat in the water.
- Wipe the table.

Teacher may ask:

- Can you make bubbles? (Yes/No.)
- Look. Which has more water in it? (This one. That one.)
- How many cups of water did you pour? (Three.)
- Can you make the water move?
- How can you make the water move? (By blowing on it/With this.)

Vocabulary


SPRINKLE DROP SPILL
WAVES RIPPLES SPLASH
DRY WET
SPRAY SQUIRT SPLASH
BUBBLES BLOW DRIP
POUR FILL MEASURE EMPTY
MORE LESS FASTER SLOWER

Skills

- comparing
- observing
- predicting
- estimating
- measuring
- experimenting
- checking
- counting

MORE IDEAS

Other Materials

- plastic bottles with squirt, spray, sprinkle, and pump tops
- plastic medicine droppers, bottles, and vials
- pumps and siphons
- 35 mm film containers
- water wheels
- containers from foods such as yogurt and margarine
- ice cube trays
- watering cans
- teapots and kettles
- child-size mops

Other Activities

Children may:

- use pails and wide or narrow brushes to "paint" indoors on chalkboard or easel; outdoors on ground or wall.
- use water in dramatic play, such as dishwashing or "cooking."
- sort floating or sinking objects into separate containers.
- discuss various uses of water in the classroom and at home, and what happens during a water shortage.

Iridescent Soap Bubbles
2 tablespoons liquid detergent
1 cup water
1 tablespoon glycerine
1/2 teaspoon sugar

Mix all ingredients. Have fun!

Interest Area — **Woodworking**

Woodworking allows children to use their eyes, their hands, their arms, and their muscles. Using the hammer strengthens arm muscles; hitting the nail on the head requires eye-hand coordination; getting the nail down into the wood takes patience as well as practice.

Teachers are not always comfortable about woodworking - safety is the primary concern. Constant, close supervision is necessary when children are handling woodworking tools.

Tips

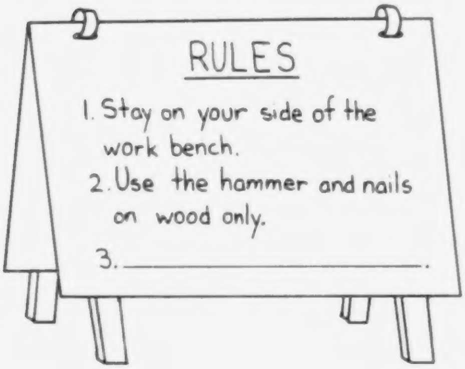
- Adults should be present at all times for supervision and assistance.
- Soft wood (e.g., white pine) is easy to use.
- Sources of free wood scraps are furniture mills, lumber yards, and vocational schools.
- Two children can work at the table at one time.
- Hammer, wood, and nails should be visible and available.
- Hammer should be grasped near the end of the handle.
- Tools are to be used only at the workbench.
- Replace tools carefully.
- Do not expect recognizable shapes, but help the child to enjoy the process.

Teacher Preparation

THINK
IT
THROUGH

- Use woodworking tools yourself before introducing them to the children.
- Place woodworking table (or a firm, steady table with a C-clamp for holding wood) where there will be enough room for two children to work at the same time.
- Place woodworking table away from the main flow of traffic.

- Woodworking tables should be low enough so that the child has good leverage for hammering.
- Plan to introduce the activity to one small group at a time.
- Set up a bin for storing wood.
- Draw the outline of the hammer in the place where it is to be stored.
- Hanging the hammer from two nails on a corkboard or a bulletin board makes for easy storage.



RULES

1. Stay on your side of the work bench.
2. Use the hammer and nails on wood only.
3. ______________.

Basic Materials

- 11- to 13-ounce bent-claw hammer with a flat striking surface.
- Large supply of nails with large heads - recommended sizes are #12, #14 or #15.
- Variety of sandpapers from fine to coarse.
- A small piece of sandpaper, to be tacked on a block - to use for smoothing rough wood.
- Lumber - soft wood that is light in weight and easily worked, e.g., white pine.

Exploring and Discovering

Children may:

- explore the various woods for color, texture, and smell.
- compare the lengths of the wood.
- hammer nails into the wood, leaving the nails at various heights.
- hammer many nails into the wood so that most of the wood is covered.
- hammer two pieces of wood together.

- hammer directly into the wood without using nails and see the marks on the wood.
- measure the depth of the wood to see if the nail is longer or shorter than the piece of wood.

Thinking Questions

Teacher might ask:

- How does the wood feel?
- Is the wood smooth?
- Is the wood rough?
- What things are made of wood?
- How does the hammer sound when you hit the nail?
- How does the hammer sound when it hits the wood?
- What will happen to the wood if you use a long nail?

Focus for the LEP Child

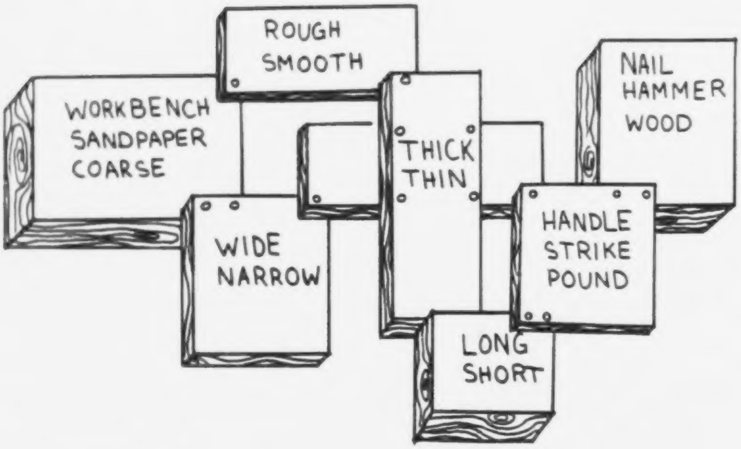
Teacher may direct:

- Put the clamp on the table.
- Bring the hammer here.
- Pick up the nail

Teacher may ask:

- Did you use a big nail or a small nail?
- Is the sandpaper smooth or rough?
- Let's count how many pieces of wood you put in your truck. How many are there?
- What made these pieces of wood stay together?

Vocabulary


ROUGH
SMOOTH
WORKBENCH
SANDPAPER
COARSE
THICK
THIN
NAIL
HAMMER
WOOD
WIDE
NARROW
HANDLE
STRIKE
POUND
LONG
SHORT

Skills

- comparing
- observing
- coordinating
- measuring
- experimenting
- checking
- counting
- designing
- planning

MORE IDEAS

Other Materials

- bottle tops
- rubber bands

Other Activities

Children may:

- hammer bottle tops into the wood, with a nail through the center of each bottle cap.
- leave nails about one-half inch above the wood surface. Children can then stretch rubber bands from one nail to the other or others, creating a design. Different colored rubber bands are recommended.
- pound the wood without nails for the release that pounding can give.

Holidays

The prekindergarten teacher observes special days with the children. Holidays provide occasions to join together in a community celebration. The diversity of backgrounds of the children and their parents must be considered in selecting the holidays to be observed. Only those events which are meaningful to the children should be celebrated; birthdays, for example, are always important dates to recognize. Family members can be invited to school to help with the festivities.

Teachers plan activities which are consistent with the children's developmental level, interests, and understandings. In deciding on an appropriate celebration, it is important to consider the children's perception of time. Four-year-olds are rooted in the here and now, and have not yet fully grasped the passage of days, weeks, or years. Holidays which commemorate historical events and past heroes may be too sophisticated for prekindergarten children.

Celebrations in the prekindergarten are simple, informal and of short duration. Special activities can be included in the schedules and routines of the normal day. Holidays are better understood when children are given opportunities to participate directly in the celebration. Children enjoy listening to adults describe holidays they remember, and may respond by relating what happened "last year when I was little." The sensitive teacher is aware that some children may not wish to join in holiday happenings and plans alternative activities for them.

Suggestions for Holiday Celebrations

- Discuss the holiday at meeting time.
  - What is special about today?
  - Who celebrates this day?
  - How can we make it special here at school?
- Share a book, poem, song, picture, or game about the holiday with the group.
- Include family members in plans for the celebration.
- Encourage adults to share their memories of past celebrations with children.
- Prepare and bring in dishes associated with holidays so children can taste a variety of foods.
- Use parents as resources for recipes, customs, stories, games, and songs for holidays.
- Borrow objects related to holiday celebrations from parents.
- Borrow reference books from the library to gain better understanding of a particular holiday.
- Borrow children's books about holidays from the library.
- Visit stores in "ethnic" neighborhoods to buy special foods and objects to bring back to the classroom.
- Patterned craft activities and elaborate projects are inappropriate.

Encourage children to participate by including activities related to the celebration in the activity centers or interest areas.

Children can:

- prepare a special food and eat it together.
- look at a book about the celebration (the illustrations may not only show familiar happenings, but also suggest how people celebrated in different times or places).
- listen to a holiday story.
- have a party in the dramatic play area.
- enjoy a parade.
- make a gift, card, drawing, collage, or special decoration.
- learn a holiday rhyme or song.
- listen to holiday music.
- share feelings and experiences.

Seasons

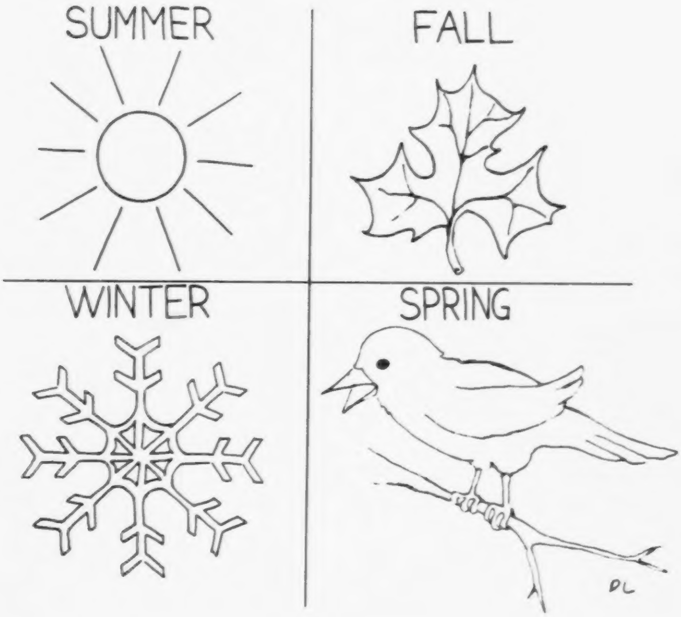
Seasonal changes help children make discoveries about their world. The teacher and children take frequent neighborhood walks to sense the rhythm and predictability of nature. Special activities are planned which build understandings across many areas of the curriculum.

Communication Arts

- Discussing changes in a tree
- Learning winter words
- Reciting a rain poem
- Making booklets about spring

Social Studies

- Discussing clothing
- Taking neighborhood walks
- Visiting local stores



Science

- Experimenting with food coloring
- Planting seeds
- Examining rain puddles
- Exploring snow

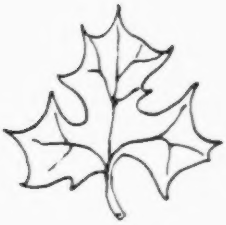
Mathematics

- Sorting leaves
- Classifying shells
- Measuring soup ingredients
- Counting seeds

Cooking

- Tasting roasted pumpkin seeds
- Feeling pulp of gourds
- Associating food with seasons
- Observing cranberries pop

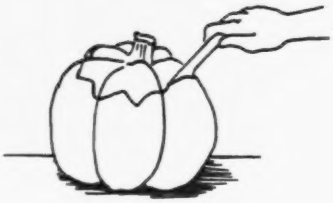
Fall Activities



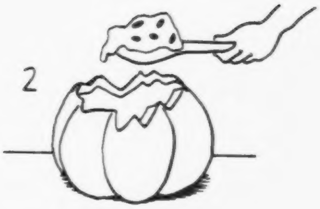
Children may:

- Take neighborhood walks.
- Observe and discuss changes fall has brought.
- Collect leaves, acorns, and pinecones to display on the Discovery Table. Use magnifying glasses to examine them.
- Adopt a tree:
    - take photographs of the tree
    - discuss changes in the tree
    - dictate observations of the tree
    - make a group booklet about the tree
    - talk about why leaves change color and fall from trees
    - sort, classify, and count leaves
- Explore seasonal foods:
    - discuss how and where food grows
    - talk about harvesting foods
    - open pumpkins and gourds to observe pulp and seeds
    - taste, smell, and feel foods
    - plant some of the seeds
    - prepare special seasonal dishes
    - find out about varieties of apples: MacIntosh, Pippin, Red Delicious, Cortland
    - observe different types of corn: Indian corn, corn on the cob, canned corn, popping corn, cornflakes
    - make popcorn

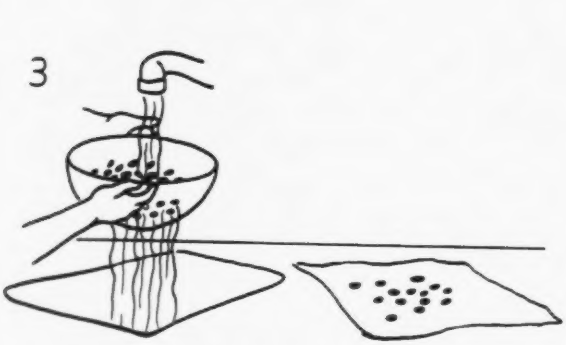
. **Roast pumpkin seeds:**



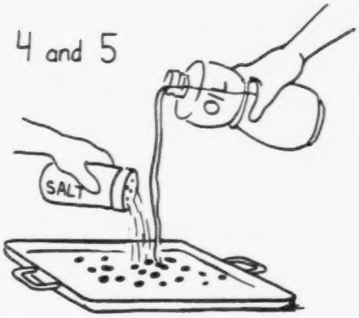
- cut pumpkin in half



- scoop out seeds and pulp

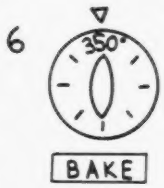


- wash and dry seeds

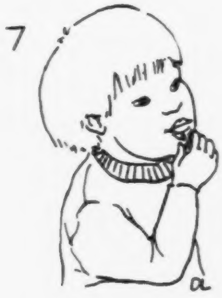


- place seeds on cookie sheet

- drizzle oil and salt over seeds

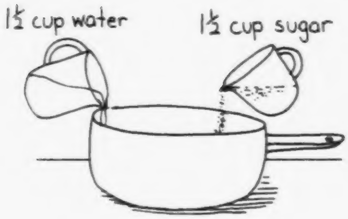


- bake at 350° until brown

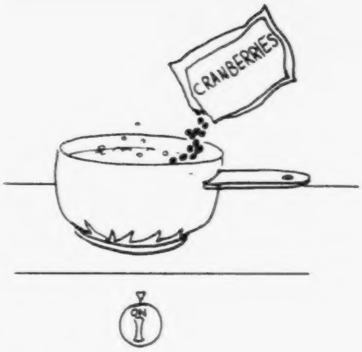


- cool and eat.

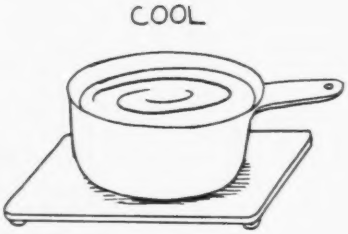
. Make cranberry sauce:



- mix in a pot:
  1 1/2 cups water
  1 1/2 cups sugar



- put pot on stove
- turn on burner and bring to a boil
- add 1 package fresh cranberries



- cook until skin pops (about 5 minutes)
- cool and eat.

. Sing a **FALL** song:

Falling Leaves (To the tune of "London Bridge")

See the leaves come tumbling down
Tumbling down, tumbling down
See the leaves come tumbling down
My fair lady!

Orange, yellow, green and brown
Green and brown, green and brown
Orange, yellow, green and brown
My fair lady!

--Blanche Solomon

Winter Activities

Children may:

- Take neighborhood walks.
- Observe the changes winter has brought.
- Discuss how winter changes our lives: clothing worn, foods eaten, how people spend their time.
- Talk about birds and animals in the winter, and how they protect themselves from the cold.
- Find out what happens to plants in the winter.
- Bring snow indoors. Put snow in small tubs. Use scoops, shovels, and spoons to measure and explore snow. Watch it melt.
- Apply food coloring to melted snow. Place it outside the window to freeze.
- Make winter collages, paintings, and drawings with:

  black paper
  white paint
  chalk
  cotton balls
  glue
  brushes of varying thicknesss

- Play a Winter Guessing Game. Place a boot, earmuffs, small piece of fur, gloves, mitten, and scarf on a tray. Discuss each object with the children. Children close their eyes. One object is removed from the tray. Children guess which object is missing.

  - or -

  Place all the objects in a special container. Children close their eyes, choose an object, feel it, and guess what it is.

. Learn a **WINTER** poem:

It's Snowing

The snow is falling
Whispery-white.
I hear it calling
Whispery-white.
I taste the flakes
So whispery-white.
It's snowing!

It bites your nose
Whispery-white.
And chills your toes
Whispery-white.
The whole world knows
When whispery-white
It's snowing!

--Marie Bobetsky

. Listen to the story Stone Soup, by Marcia Brown. The class can make vegetable soup as a nourishing winter snack.

Start with one solid well-scrubbed stone, as in the story, and 2 1/2 quarts of water.

Add to the pot:
- 4 carrots, sliced
- 2 potatoes, cut in large chunks
- 2 stalks of celery, chopped
- 1 whole onion, peeled

Bring vegetables and water to a boil. Reduce heat, cover pot, and simmer for 45 minutes.

Add:
- 1/2 cup fresh, shelled peas
- 1 cup string beans, broken in half
- 2 tomatoes, sliced
- 1 sprig fresh parsley
- salt and pepper to taste.

Simmer for 10 minutes longer. Serve and enjoy!

. Enjoy singing about vegetables:

. Sing **WINTER** songs:

Vegetable Soup (To the tune of: "Farmer in the Dell")

The soup is boiling up
The soup is boiling up
Stir slow, around we go
The soup is boiling up.

First we add the stone
First we add the stone
Stir slow, around we go
The soup is boiling up.

Now we add some carrots
Now we add some carrots
Stir slow, around we go
The soup is boiling up.

--Jean Warren

Children stand around large, imaginary pot pretending to stir the soup as they sing. Similar verses may be added to include all the vegetables used in the soup.

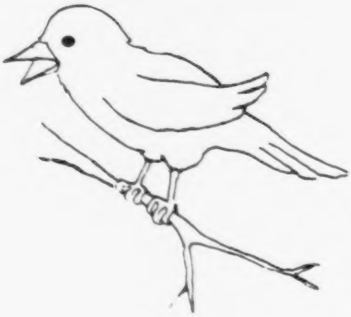
"Vegetable Soup Song" by Jean Warren from *Piggyback Songs* compiled by Jean Warren. (Everett, WA 98203: Warren Publishing House, Inc., Totline Press, P.O. Box 2255, 1983).

The Little Snowman (To the tune of "I'm a Little Teapot")

Make a little snowman, start it with a ball
Pile on lots and lots of snow, build it up real tall
Make another round ball, put it on the top
When the sun comes out, watch the snowman PLOP!

--Blanche Solomon

Spring Activities



Children may:

- Take neighborhood walks.
- Observe and discuss changes spring has brought.
- Sprout grass by placing seeds on a damp sponge.
- Watch seeds grow in soil by planting them in a glass tank, or in plastic containers.
- Plant seeds in small milk cartons to take home when sprouted.
- Examine seedlings and sprouts with magnifying glasses.
- Observe puddles after a rainstorm.
- Blow ping-pong balls in the water table, or in a tub of water, to observe the actions of "wind."
- Make spring collages with objects found on a walk: feathers, flowers, grass, and leaves.
- Cut and paste pictures of flowers and plants from seed catalogs.
- Make pinwheels and kites. Take them outdoors and watch the wind at work.
- Make group booklets about spring.

- Learn **SPRING** poems:

Rain Play

Outdoors the rain is playing
As only rain can play.
It bounces on the sidewalk
In a splishy-splashy way.

It skips on panes of windows.
Down streets it runs. Besides,
On all the bright umbrellas
It slides and slides and slides.

--Leland B. Jacobs

"It's Spring" from *Resources for Creative Teaching in Early Childhood Education* by Bonnie Mack Flemming, Darlene Softley Hamilton and JoAnne Deal Hicks, copyright ©1977 by Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc. Reprinted by permission of the publisher.

Yellow

The dandelion
Is peeking up,
So is
The shiny crocus cup.
And daffodils
Are glistening,
Yellow is a sign
It's spring.

--Leland B. Jacobs

"Yellow" by Leland Jacobs. Reprinted by permission of the publisher, Early Years, Inc., Westport Connecticut 06880. From the April 1984 issue of *Early Years/K-8*.

- Sing **SPRING** songs.

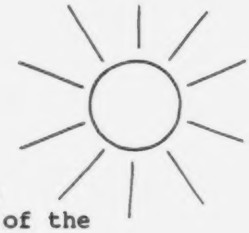
It's Spring

Didn't wear a jacket to school today.
It's spring, it's spring, it's spring!
Saw a little robin and heard my teacher say,
"It's spring, it's spring, it's spring!"

--JoAnne Deal Hicks

"Rain Play" by Leland Jacobs. Reprinted by permission of the publisher, Early Years, Inc., Westport Connecticut 06880. From the April 1984 issue of *Early Years/K-8*.

Summer Activities

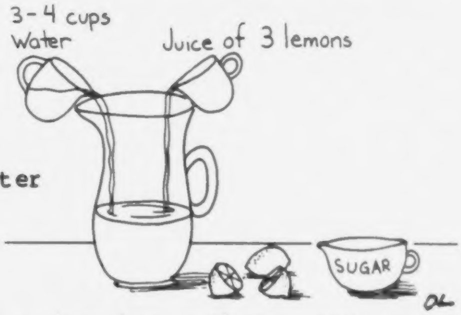


Children may:

- Take neighborhood walks.
- Observe and discuss signs of summer: leaves on trees, flowers in bloom, sounds of insects and birds, warmth of the sun.
- Talk about vacation plans.
- Enjoy a snack or picnic lunch outdoors in the yard, or at a nearby park.
- Make lemonade for snack:

  In pitcher, mix:
    juice of 3 lemons
    3-4 cups of cold water
    sugar to taste

  Serve and enjoy!



- Taste different fruits, such as berries, melons, papayas, mangoes.
- Plant and care for flowers.
- Examine seashells with magnifying glasses at the Discovery Table.
- Visit the beach. Collect seashells, driftwood, and seagrass.
- Blow bubbles.
- Play Lotto, matching real shells with shell shapes.
- Learn a **SUMMER** poem:

Mud

Mud is very nice to feel
All squishy-squash between the toes!
I'd rather wade in wiggly mud
Than smell a yellow rose.

Nobody else but the rosebush knows
How nice mud feels
Between the toes.

--Polly Chase Boyden

"Mud" by Polly Chase Boyden from *The Random House Book of Poetry for Children* edited by Jack Prelutsky. (NY: Random House, 1983), p. 28. Reprinted by permission of the estate of Polly Chase Boyden.

. Sing a **SUMMER** song:

Blowing Bubbles

(To the tune of "I'm Forever Blowing Bubbles")

I'm forever blowing bubbles
Pretty bubbles in the air.
They fly so high
Nearly reach the sky.
But then they fall
And fade and die.
Bubbles I keep blowing
Blowing here and there.
I'm forever blowing bubbles
Pretty bubbles in the air.

--Jean Warren

"Blowing Bubbles" by Jean Warren from *Piggyback Songs* compiled by Jean Warren. (Everett, WA: Warren Publishing, 1983).

Trips

For the preschool child learning is not confined to a classroom, nor should it be. Taking trips affords children an opportunity to explore the workings of the world. As children observe, they ask questions, and they begin to see relationships when they study the people and places around them. Through taking trips, children begin to feel more comfortable about themselves and more secure about their place in the world. In addition, trip taking helps children orient themselves spatially and geographically.

Children will feel more secure about taking trips if simple rules of expected behavior are set down before venturing out of the school building into the neighborhood. Trips can be introduced on a small scale, perhaps a visit to another classroom to share snacks or observe a pet gerbil.

Trips are derived from the children's interests, and are related to the ongoing curriculum. They should be developmentally appropriate for four-year-olds, dealing with familiar subjects such as family, home, and community.

Planning

. The teacher plans for the trip by asking these questions:

  - Why is this particular trip being taken?
  - How does it relate to the children's interests?
  - How will it further their learnings?

. The teacher calls first to make arrangements.

. The teacher "scouts out" the trip site in order to:

  - plan appropriately;
  - anticipate how to get there and the amount of time it will take;
  - locate the bathrooms and water fountains;
  - know what to expect.

. The teacher talks to the staff at the trip site to find out:

  - What are their expectations?
  - How many children can attend?
  - Are there activities planned for the children?
  - How will the staff be of assistance?

. The teacher shapes the trip by:

  - letting the staff at the trip site know about specific needs or requests in advance.
  - asking if the children can observe particular objects of interest.

. When taking trips outside the school building, the teacher checks with principal and district office for information on proper procedures.

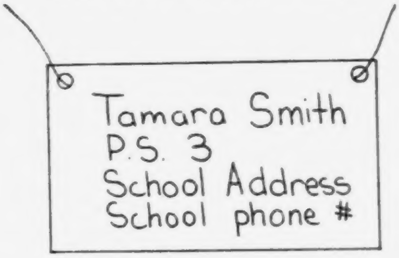
. The teacher sends a form home to the parents about the trip, including information about how it will relate to work being done in the classroom. If needed, volunteers should be requested. A tear-off permission slip should be part of this form.

. Whenever children leave the building to go on a trip, they wear name tags.

  - Make name tags out of oaktag.
  - Include child's name, and the name, address, and phone number of the school.

- Cover the name tag with clear contact paper, punch a hole in it, and thread a long cord through it.
- Name tags are worn around children's necks.

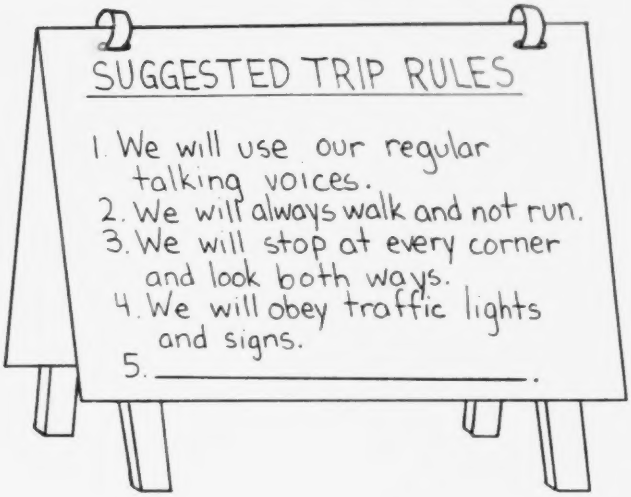
Sample Name Tag:



Tamara Smith
P.S. 3
School Address
School phone #

. The teacher has clear expectations about children's behavior during a trip.

  - Discuss appropriate behavior at a group meeting the day before the trip, and again just before departure.
  - Establish rules together. Review them often.



SUGGESTED TRIP RULES

1. We will use our regular talking voices.
2. We will always walk and not run.
3. We will stop at every corner and look both ways.
4. We will obey traffic lights and signs.
5. ________________.

. SAFETY IS VERY IMPORTANT!

  - Think about how the children will walk. Will they be on a line or in small groups?

. The teacher prepares an alternate activity in case the trip is cancelled.

In Small Groups

There should be several adults: the teacher, paraprofessional, and at least one or two parents. Children may be grouped according to similar interests or with friends; sometimes they may be grouped in order to encourage particular friendships. Children who have difficulty with self-control should not be grouped together. Parents should be with their

children. The teacher should be at the front of the group, parents in the middle, and the paraprofessional at the rear. It will be easier to form a line later in the year than earlier.

On Line

The teacher is at the front of the line, parents in the middle, and the paraprofessional at the rear. Children are not asked to form a line according to height or sex. The line-up process becomes a creative learning experience with suggestions such as: "If you are wearing blue you may get on line." Or, more specifically, "If you are wearing a blue and red striped shirt, jeans with a red belt, and white sneakers, you may get on line."

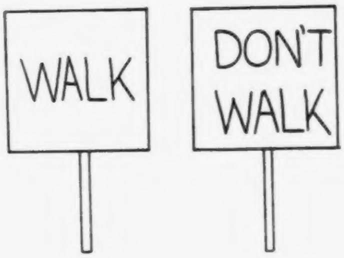
- The teacher sends a thank-you note when appropriate. The note can be composed with the children's help. This is good public relations, and it makes it that much easier to repeat a pleasant trip experience.

Additional Suggestions

- Expectations of parents are discussed beforehand:
  - which children they are responsible for;
  - where to stand on line;
  - how they can be of help.

- Children should be encouraged to try to go to the bathroom before leaving. (Even on a "mini-trip" to another classroom to see a pet, someone will inevitably need to use the bathroom.) The teacher can sing songs, play finger games, or read a story with the rest of the group during this preparatory time.

- Teacher-made "WALK" and "DON'T WALK" signs can be discussed at a meeting before taking a trip into the neighborhood.



- A sign is placed on the classroom door with information about where the children have gone and when they will return.

- A head count is taken before leaving, at various times during the trip, before returning, and upon returning to the classroom.

- An emergency kit should be available. It should contain such items as tissues, damp paper towels in plastic bags, bandaids, and safety pins.

- Children should have a snack if they will be out of the building for any length of time. They usually work up an appetite, and snack time is a good way to bring the group together for a calming, socializing experience.

- A camera is useful for recording the experience for future discussions and activities.

- Bags may be brought along to hold items children find along the way or at the trip site.

- The teacher is flexible. A well planned trip to the supermarket may be waylaid by an intense interest in earthworms wiggling in a puddle. The children's interest in the earthworms is just as valid as the trip to the supermarket. If special arrangements for the trip have already been made with the supermarket, they should be honored. Time can be provided on the way back for observing the worms.

- A newsy note to the parents can be sent as a follow-up activity:

  - Describe the trip, note points of interest.
  - Explain some of the follow-up activities that children will be working on.

Follow-Up Activities

- Discuss the trip, comparing and contrasting what children thought they would see, hear, smell, and touch with what they actually did; new vocabulary.
- Display photographs of trip so children can see and touch them.
- Prepare a discovery table of objects found on the trip.
- Prepare a trip book using the photographs - recording and ordering the experience.
- Prepare a trip book of children's drawings and dictated stories about the trip.
- Involve the children in writing thank-you notes by having them dictate their ideas to an adult, and by drawing pictures about the trip.
- Make concentration games out of photographs taken on the trip (order two sets of prints and cover both in clear contact paper).
- Make lotto games from photographs from trip.
- Provide props to stimulate dramatic play involving places visited on trips.
- If the class visited a place that prepares food, arrange a cooking activity to make something the children saw or tasted.
- Introduce songs, stories, or poems that are related to the trip.
- Encourage the children to make up songs, stories, or poems that are related to the trip.

Trip Suggestions

In the school building:

- A trip to look at things of interest in the building: the time clock in the office, bulletin boards, fire extinguishers, bells, windows, doors
- School office
- Principal's office
- Nurse's office
- Custodian's office or workroom
- Library
- Gym
- Art room
- Mathematics room
- Another class (to see a pet, view something special, share a snack)

In the Community

- Seasonal walks to notice changes and collect things
- An after-a-rain walk
- A snowy-day walk
- A shadow walk
- A truck walk
- A tree walk or growing-things walk
- A "looking up" walk
- A "looking down" walk
- Fruit and vegetable stand
- Barbershop or beauty parlor
- Bakery
- Pizza shop
- Restaurant
- Supermarket
- Butcher
- Fish store
- Pet shop
- Shoe repair shop
- Police station
- Fire station
- Post office
- Gas station
- Rivers
- Bridges
- Heliports
- Parks
- Construction sites
- Street repair sites

Sample Trip

A "Looking Down" Walk in the Neighborhood

The Week Before

Send a form home to parents with a tear-off permission slip, describing the trip and requesting volunteers.

Sample Form

Dear Parents,

On Tuesday, April 27, we will be going on a walk around the neighborhood. We are calling our trip a "looking down" walk!

Lately we've been exploring and talking about our five senses. On this walk, children will be asked to use one sense in particular, their eyes. We will let you know what we can discover when we look down!

We will leave at 10:30 and return to school by 11:30.

It would be wonderful if some parents could help us on our walk. If you are able to join us, please check the box below when you fill out the attached permission slip.

Thank you!

Sincerely,

Teacher's Signature

CUT OR TEAR HERE

- -

My child, Tamara Smith, has my permission to accompany the class on a neighborhood walk on Tuesday, April 27.

I can come, too. ☐

I cannot come with you. ☐

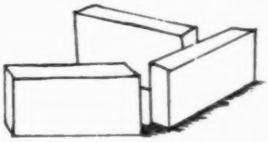
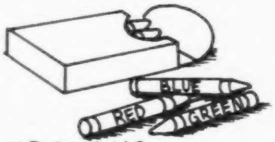
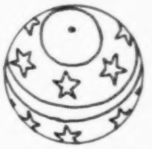
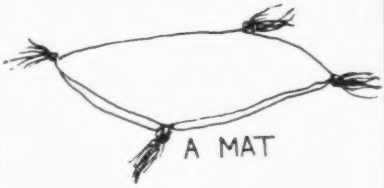
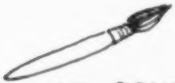
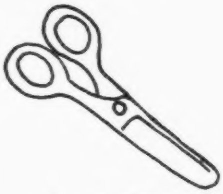
__________________ Date

__________________ Parent's signature

Day Before

Take a "looking down" walk around the classroom.
Make a chart of what the children saw:

> We took a "looking down" walk in our room.
> We saw:

 BLOCKS	 CRAYONS
 A BALL	 A MAT
 A PAINT BRUSH	 A SCISSOR

Day of the Trip

Getting Ready

- Children take turns using bathroom while adult engages rest of group in songs, story, or finger plays.
- Children put on name tags.
- Children come to group meeting to discuss the trip: "Where will we be going?" "What might we see?" "When will we be back at school?"
- Teacher takes notes of children's ideas about what they may see on the trip, to be discussed and compared later with what they actually will have seen.
- Teacher reviews rules of behavior for trip.
- Children are asked to get their coats and line up or may be assigned to small groups with an adult.
- Adults bring emergency kit and bags to collect objects children find on the ground.
- Teacher puts sign on the door:

We've gone for
a neighborhood walk
We will be back
at 11:30.

On the Trip

- Take time.
- Explore.
- Encourage the children to discuss what they see.
- Encourage the children to collect things they see on the ground (discourage them from touching inappropriate or dangerous objects).
- Record the experience by taking photographs.

Follow-Up Activities

- Display found objects on a discovery table. Encourage touching and discussion of objects.
- Make a lotto game out of photographs of some of the objects found on the trip.
- Take photographs of the children's feet to make a concentration game of everyone's shoes. Cover two sets of photographs with clear contact paper.
- Make a book about the trip with the children by using the photographs and the children's dictated stories about each photograph.

- Make a book about the trip with children using their drawings and dictated stories.
- Children can make collages with objects they found on the trip.
- If the children observed ants on the trip, the teacher might provide an ant farm for the classroom.
- During a group meeting, compare and contrast what the children thought they might see with what they actually saw.
- A newsy note may be sent to the parents a few days after the trip. Describe the trip, as well as some of the follow-up activities.

Sample Note

Dear Parents,

Today we went on a "looking down" trip through the neighborhood.

Kate noticed leaves and paper by the curb. Jamal found a black and grey rock as big as his fist. Jasmine found an old envelope with a stamp on it. She noticed that there were many different letters of the alphabet on the envelope.

We plan to make a book about our trip using photographs taken on the trip. We are going to put all the things we found on a discovery table, along with a magnifying glass so that we can see them better.

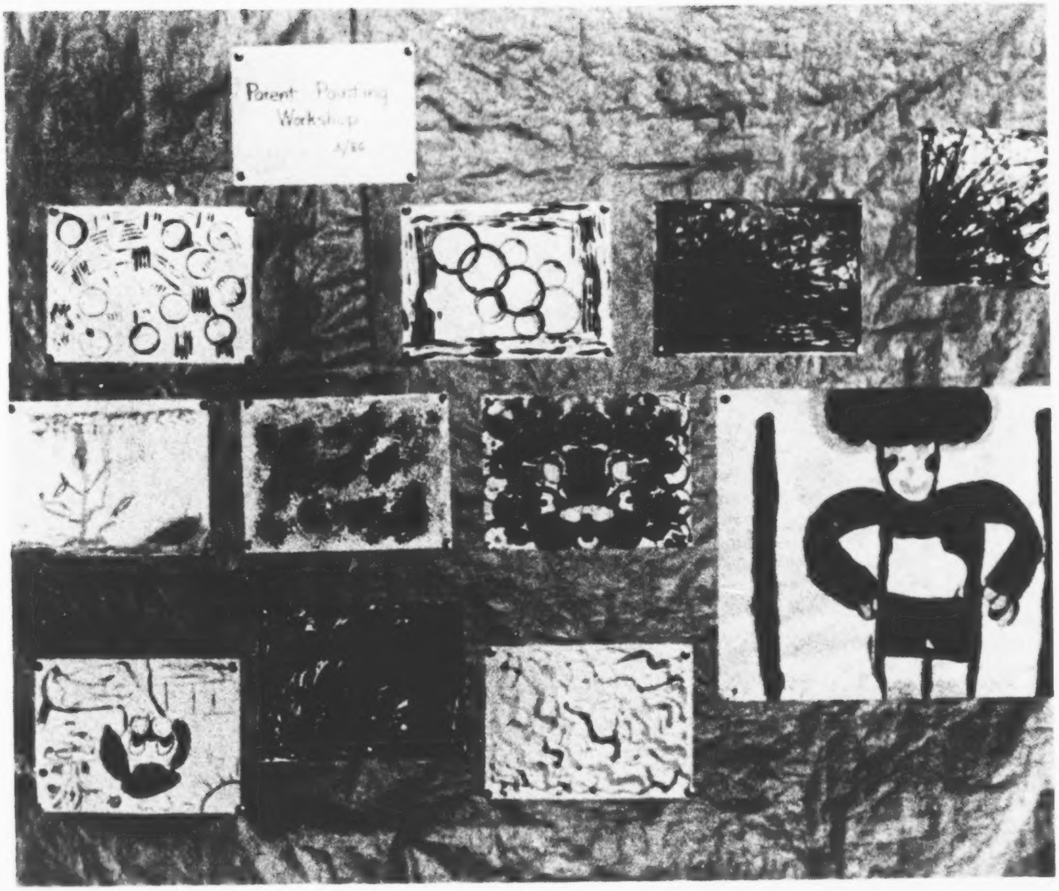
Please come in and see our book and discovery table!

Sincerely,

Ms. Jones

Section 6

PARENT INVOLVEMENT


Parent Painting
Workshop
4/86

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Effective home/school relations provide a strong support system for the prekindergarten program. When teachers and parents cooperate and share information, early childhood development is enhanced. A child's enrollment in prekindergarten is frequently the family's first contact with the school. Parents are concerned about children's adjustment to a new environment:

"Will my child be happy?"
"What is the school program like?"
"Will my child find a friend?"
"How will my child achieve?"

Interest is high. The time is ripe for initiating and reinforcing parent involvement in children's learning.

Establishing the Home/School Connection

Psychological and economic stress upon parents, especially parents of children entering prekindergarten, makes it imperative that school personnel take time to begin this partnership with sensitivity and thoughtful planning. A warm, caring atmosphere in the school is a first step. The staff's plans reflect acceptance of varied family structures and respect for the rich cultural diversity represented. The teacher listens to parent concerns and reaches out to involve them in meaningful ways. In talking to the parents, the teacher explains the developmental needs of four-year-olds, and clarifies the content of the program. This helps parents understand that prekindergarten is not a downward extension of school as they remember it, although much of later learning can have roots in prekindergarten activities.

Parent involvement is a year-long enterprise. The following four phases represent one method which has worked.

Phase I: The First Connection — Transition from Home to School

Registration

When parent and child enter school to register, involvement begins. A climate of acceptance is established by:

- locating registration in a special room, equipped with small chairs and a table, on which can be placed books and simple activities attractive to waiting four-year-olds.
- designating a staff member to assist parents in reading and completing necessary forms.
- informing parents about admission criteria.
- explaining that parent involvement is required.

Orientation Meeting/Class Visit

The orientation meeting gives parents an overview of the program and provides information about beginning days. Some suggestions for a successful meeting are:

- Mail invitation to parents' home. (Invitations to be translated into the school's dominant language[s].)
- Request that parents attend by themselves, if at all possible. (If young children come, arrange to have a staff member play/read with them in a room nearby.)
- Provide name tags for staff and parents.
- Discuss parent expectations and responsibilities, children's absences, arrival and dismissal times, volunteer services, program involvement.
- Clarify goals and scope of program.
- Talk about actual experiences children will have during the year and how these experiences will foster learning and development.
- Distribute a calendar of events for the month, indicating dates of released times for staff development, class trips, special events, children's birthdays, and holidays.
- Talk about lunch and snack.
- Complete medical and dental forms, if necessary.
- Provide time for open discussion of parents' concerns.
- Give parents the opportunity to visit a prekindergarten classroom to gain a sense of the program.

The Home Visit

The home visit allows a staff member to observe the child and parent in a familiar setting and learn about special parent skills and talents. It gives the child an opportunity to meet a member of the staff, who brings a colored tag on which the parent prints the child's name. A smoother transition from home to school is insured when the child wears the tag to class on the first day and recognizes the visitor.

The School Visit

Providing a special room or area for parents, even a small one, helps stimulate parent involvement and makes them feel that they are special, too. An enthusiastic Family Assistant or other staff member in charge of the Parents' Room creates a climate of acceptance that extends the home/school connection.

Some suggestions:

- Make the area look cozy and private.
- Have refreshments available.
- Provide materials for both relaxation and stimulation.
- Have an interpreter available so that non-English-speaking parents are included in communications.
- Post notices on a bulletin board.
- Keep a set of name tags for parents to wear in school. This will foster conversation and build self-esteem.

Phase II: The Beginning of the Prekindergarten Program (may vary from one-two months, depending on the needs of the site)

This getting-acquainted period is designed to meet the needs and interests of the parent group served. It is a time for building mutual trust between parents and staff and among parents themselves. Planning enjoyable activities for the first parent meetings helps to motivate attendance. Door prizes can be included as additional incentives.

Some suggestions:

- A get-acquainted party/breakfast.
- An exploration of prekindergarten materials and equipment, including discussion of their role in child development and learning.
- A meeting to make something for children to use in the classroom, e.g., sew doll clothes, mount pictures. Parents share talents with each other.
- Activities children do (on an adult level): cutting silhouettes of each other; planting seeds/cuttings for Parents' Area; participating in arts/crafts or music/movement (aerobics).
- Making and eating simple snacks.
- Typing instruction.
- A lending library of books, magazines, games.

Phase III: Connections During the Prekindergarten Year — Involvement Begins

This phase includes volunteer parent participation in the prekindergarten class activities, informational presentations and workshops for parents/caregivers, and individual parent-teacher conferences.

Early in the year, before classroom participation begins, parents are given a checklist on which they can indicate how they would like to contribute to the program. Parent volunteers are given orientation and training during meetings in the Parents' Room; the teacher prepares a printed guide for parents to follow. In some schools, a parent who is familiar with the program can be enlisted to share information with other parents. Once parent participation activities are determined, a monthly schedule of activities is posted in or near the Parents' Room. If a newsletter is sent home, the schedule can be included there as well.

Parents are given opportunities to observe their children's school behavior in order to help the teacher plan for the children's development. As parents and staff work together for the benefit of the children, they gain valuable insights about and appreciation of each other's attitudes, interests, and expectations.

Some positive ways to include parents in prekindergarten activities follow:

- **Class List**. Parents help to compile a list of names, addresses, and phone numbers of all families in the class.

- **Newsletter**. A regularly compiled newsletter about events in the prekindergarten is a statement to parents that they are valued participants in the children's school life. Parent contributions are solicited; a parent with appropriate skills might even act as editor. Information about each child is part of every edition.

- **Translating**. If the children come from homes in which languages other than English are spoken, parents can help each other by translating written and verbal communications from the school.

- **Joining Class Trips**. Extra adults ensure safety and provide opportunities for adult-child interaction. However, because the teacher is ultimately responsible for the class, directions to other adults accompanying the class must be clear and specific. For example, "Ms. Smith, would you please walk at the rear of the group to be sure that no child gets left behind."

- **Observing in the Classroom.** It is difficult for parents to see their children "acting normally" during a visit. Planning and discussion before observation helps parents understand that their presence in the room usually changes child behavior. When parents participate in class activities, however, they are able to take note of their child's behavior in an informal way.

- **Participating in Class Activities.** The benefits of an extra pair of hands in an early childhood classroom are many. When parents are assisting, children can gain an extra sense of security. It has also been found that parents gain a feeling of dignity and self-worth when they participate in their children's class activities.

- **Gathering Materials.** Parents are often the source of wonderful materials for class projects. Ask them to collect and bring to school buttons, ribbons, shoe boxes, wood scraps, computer paper, and any of the other cast-offs listed in the Art section of this book.

- **Other Ways Parents Participate**

  They can:

  - mix paints
  - decorate bulletin boards
  - make costumes
  - repair toys and equipment
  - play games with children
  - demonstrate an art/craft
  - share hobbies/collections
  - read or tell a story
  - teach a song in another language
  - operate audiovisual equipment
  - play a musical instrument
  - prepare snacks

Communicating with Parents

Communication with parents can be divided into two categories:

- the individual conference about a particular child;
- the group meeting about common concerns or information.

Individual Conferences

These are scheduled formally at least twice during the year; they can also be held informally, on an impromptu basis.

Conferences are times to share information about, perceptions of, and strengths of children. They are times for teachers to listen as well as talk, to gain insight about parent expectations and concerns.

Suggestions to the teacher:

- Give parents a choice of times to attend.
- Be an advocate for the child.
- Maintain a positive attitude.
- Balance statements of strength with discussions of areas where growth is needed; avoid preoccupation with problem areas.
- Choose words carefully, asking, "Is what I am going to say in the child's best interest?"
- Try a telephone conference if all attempts fail to bring the parent to school.

Since conferences with parents are serious, important events, teachers exercise care when responding to the "How is Sonia doing?" question, posed just at dismissal time. One reply might be: "I'd love to talk to you about Sonia, but it's difficult right now. Let's make an appointment." This does not rule out a quick exchange in the child's presence, such as, "Ms. Lopez, if you have a minute, I'd love to show you the special block building Sonia made this morning. We left it up for you to see."

Parents and teachers have a special opportunity to experience the joyful days in a prekindergartener's life together. The relationship between them is of extreme importance to the child they "share." Descriptions of the child's day-to-day life in school and how time is spent at home are equally important. The following specific suggestions can help children in getting off to a good start.

Group Conferences

Regularly scheduled group parent conferences can focus not only on child development and the prekindergarten program, but also on parents' concerns. Workshops and seminars can be planned on other topics of interest, including:

- consumer education
- educational opportunities
- nutrition
- community services
- health

Getting Off to a Good Start

Parents can do many things at home that will get children off to a good start in prekindergarten. One very important contribution parents can make toward their children's success at school is in helping their four-year-olds to develop positive attitudes towards school.

Parents who themselves demonstrate interest and enthusiasm towards school-related activities are also fostering positive attitudes in their children. Children who observe their parent's delight at a piece of artwork completed at school begin to associate school-related activities with parental approval.

Attendance

Coming to school every day and being on time are very important habits to establish in the prekindergarten. Parents can stress the importance of school by encouraging good attendance and punctuality. It is helpful to get young children ready early enough so that they do not have to rush.

Bedtime

It is important to keep a set bedtime so that children get enough sleep and are well rested to begin the day.

Nutrition

An adequate breakfast helps children to be alert and energetic. Healthy snacks and nutritious meals contribute to the well-being of children.

Safety

For safety, children should know and be able to tell their first and last names, as well as their street address. Some may remember phone numbers, too. As parents take children to and from school, they can reinforce safety rules regarding traffic lights and crossing streets.

Developing Responsibility and Independence

Being allowed to "help" in simple ways at home encourages four-year-olds to learn and grow in many of the ways that are important for the school program.

The following are a few suggestions for working out a plan of home activities:

Responsibility and Independence

The parent/caregiver guides the child to help:

- put away toys and games.
- keep room neat.
- complete specific jobs/tasks.
- set or clear the table.

Caring for Self

The parent/caregiver guides the child to:

- learn to select and hang up clothing.
- learn to put on clothing, shoes, and socks.
- learn to button and zip.
- tend to bathroom and personal grooming needs.

Children should be praised for a job well done!

Getting Along With Others

The parent/caregiver:

- makes arrangements for child to play with others.
- teaches child how to share and respect other children's property.
- teaches child which other adults to accept as friends.
- helps child learn to listen to others and follow directions.

Routines

The parent/caregiver:

- designates appropriate times to go to bed, get up, eat, rest, and play that are consistent with child's needs and school schedule.

Making Decisions

Whenever opportunities arise, parents can allow children to plan activities or solve problems by encouraging decision-making. The choices should be kept simple: "Which book do you want me to read?" "Which game shall we play?" "Would you like an apple or a banana for a snack?"

The way is left open for more than one suggestion, so that the parent and child can discuss which might be best.

A Word on Television

Television can be a learning experience if limited and used properly. There are many informative, educational, and entertaining programs, but too much television is not good for young children.

When adults choose programs with children, an appropriate television viewing schedule can be planned. Choosing programs with care (and watching along with children) helps make television a more constructive experience. Discussing favorite programs helps children extend their vocabulary and concepts of the world around them.

Other Activities

During the conference, the teacher may wish to suggest at-home activities which meet the needs of individual children. These and other activities can be listed in the class newsletter as well. Some possibilities are:

- Point out the names of objects and places.
- Play word games with children, such as "rhyming," "opposites," "finish the sentence."
- Read to children and ask them to retell the story.
- Ask children to place objects in different positions, such as "on the ____________"; "under the ___________"; "in front of___________."
- Look through magazines with children and identify items that are the same color/shape.
- Ask children to identify sounds in the home and outside (vacuum cleaner, running water, siren, car horn).
- Clap syllables of family members' names. Ask children to repeat them.
- Ask children to find household objects that are the same color.
- Name body parts and play a game of "Simon Says."
- Encourage counting of objects at home and on shopping trips.
- Describe and compare sizes and weights of household objects for children.
- Provide materials with which children can paste, color, paint, and build.
- Encourage children to imitate animal movements ("gallop like a horse"; "slither like a snake").
- Have old clothes available in a place where children can play "dress up."

Phase IV: Continuity

A year of rewarding parent involvement with prekindergarten will motivate continued home/school connections. When the time comes for children to move on to kindergarten, the teacher plans activities to help facilitate continuity:

- . A culminating class activity for children and parents.
- . A list of suggested summer activities for parent/child involvement during vacation time.
- . A meeting to share information about the new kindergarten class.

Section 7
HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES

HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES

Health and Nutrition

Concern for the development of the whole child is reflected throughout the prekindergarten program. The staff work together to provide and maintain a safe and healthy school environment. They also aid parents in locating and obtaining appropriate health care for their children. The health and nutrition components of the prekindergarten program support the early childhood education goal of fostering the development of the whole child. A comprehensive plan for prevention and early intervention is implemented as a team effort.

The classroom staff, school health personnel, parents, and children all work together to implement a health care program.

Teachers and other staff help children keep healthy by:

- observing children informally throughout the day.
- encouraging children to inform an adult when they feel ill.
- sending a child who appears to be ill to the health aide (or other person designated) for examination and possibly to be sent home.
- being alert to children's special medical problems.
- finding out about children's allergies and sensitivities to animals, plants, chocolate, paint.
- observing changes in children's behavior.
- planning for class visits by a doctor, dentist, nurse or hospital worker to talk about and show children how to take care of themselves.
- reading books to children about good health practices.
- sharing books with children about visits to the dentist, doctor or hospital.
- singing "good health" songs with the class, such as "This Is the Way We Brush Our Teeth" to the tune of "Here We Go Round the Mulberry Bush."
- reminding them to bathe or shower every day.
- discussing foods which are nutritious for children to eat.
- preparing healthful snacks with small groups.
- providing an open box of tissue for children to use.
- scheduling active and quiet periods throughout the day.
- obtaining a first-aid kit for the classroom and Parents' Area.

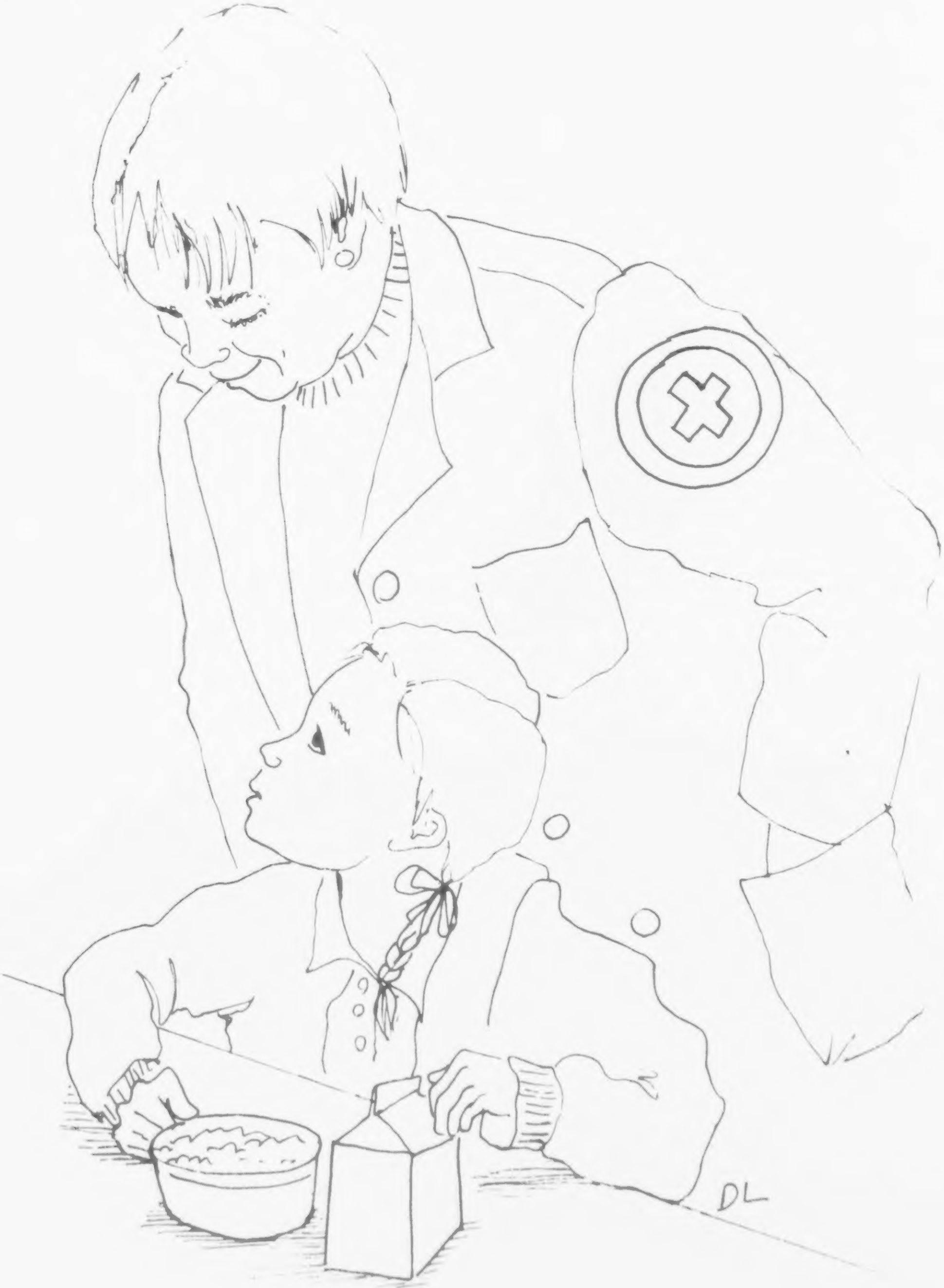
Children help themselves keep healthy by:

- covering up coughs and sneezes.
- remembering that sharing cups and utensils may spread germs.
- looking at books and pictures about keeping healthy.
- washing hands before eating and cooking, and after toileting.
- using large/small muscles in active play.
- dressing appropriately for outdoor activities.
- properly disposing of garbage in the classroom.
- throwing all crumbs away after eating.
- bringing nutritious snacks to school to share with other children.

The teachers and staff help parents keep children healthy by:

- discussing appropriate bedtimes and hours of sleep for four-year-olds.
- discussing foods which are nutritious for children to eat.
- enlisting parents' cooperation in preparing snacks.
- requesting that extra clothing be sent to school in case of spills and accidents.
- contacting parents if a health problem, or a potential health problem, exists.
- requesting parents to keep children at home when they are ill.
- educating parents about prevention issues.
- making arrangements for children to visit doctors, dentists, and clinics with parents' consent.
- identifying local health practictioners such as doctors, dentists, clinics, neighborhood hospital staff, and sharing this information with parents.
- informing parents about the services of local mental health agencies.
- obtaining the services of health groups and agencies, such as the Dairy Council, to present workshops for parents.

There are unlimited occasions for school personnel to contribute to and support the health teaching/learning process. When health program activities encompass working not only with school staff, but also with parents and community agencies, the impact of developmental and preventive services for the young child is increased.



Social Services

While the establishment of a climate which builds parent confidence and trust is the joint responsibility of the whole professional staff, social services personnel sensitively lead the way in the establishment of effective home-school relations. From the time they participate during intake interviews, through their follow-up services when children move on to kindergarten, they provide essential help in strengthening the family unit and in facilitating the young child's healthy adjustment to school.

The social services component in the prekindergarten program acts as part of a support system for families which have pressing problems. Staff members work to counsel parents who are dependent on public assistance; whose living conditions are crowded; whose children have difficulty adjusting to school. They assist single parents in tackling overwhelming responsibilities. Social services personnel offer guidance and referral services to families where chronic illness is complicating home life, or where death and/or divorce are having adverse effects on children's development. The help of social services personnel is crucial for orienting newcomers to the school community, especially if the newcomers have recently arrived from a non-English-speaking country.

In helping families to solve problems, social services personnel enlist the cooperation of a variety of community agencies, including hospitals and mental health and drug clinics. If the situation requires referral for private care, this assistance may be offered as well.

As members of the prekindergarten team, the social worker and family assistant also perform important functions in the education process. In cooperation with the teachers, they conduct workshops to inform parents about developmental goals of prekindergarten. They offer suggestions for successful participation in parent-teacher conferences. They also encourage parents to continue their education and frequently organize skills development workshops. In addition, the social services team distributes informational material and holds discussion groups for both staff and parents, on topics of current common interest, such as consumer education and nutrition.

The social services team:

- encourages and establishes parent confidence and trust in the school.
- participates in intake interviews of parents to obtain information about children and families.
- makes initial home visits with another staff member.
- observes and records child behavior during home and classroom visits.
- helps acquaint new families with neighborhood resources.
- talks to parents and teaching staff about how to cope with initial separation anxieties of children and parents.
- organizes and maintains Parents' Area for informal interaction and workshops.
- arranges to have the prekindergarten program explained to non-English-speaking parents.
- encourages parents to participate in class activities and other school functions.
- encourages parents to attend regular conferences with the teacher.
- offers suggestions to parents for sucessful participation in parent-teacher conferences.
- encourages parents to take children for dental and physical examinations/immunization.
- identifies and maintains regular contact with community health and welfare agencies.
- intervenes in crisis situations, as needed.
- refers parents to appropriate agencies, as needed.
- conducts play therapy sessions, as needed.
- participates in interdisciplinary conferences about child development.
- helps parents identify factors which help children succeed in school (diet, health, sleep, regular attendance).
- conducts group and individual counseling workshops.
- when possible, assists in escorting a child to and from school if a parent is incapacitated (to avoid the child's absence).
- organizes discussion workshops on topics of parent interest.
- encourages parents to pursue their educational goals and helps with completing application forms for high school or college.
- follows up problems in the next grade, when possible.

A review of the social service activities clearly indicates how this work can help to strengthen the home-school connection and, in so doing, ultimately help each child towards a joyous and successful prekindergarten experience.

School Health Services and Screening

A complete physical examination is required for all children entering the New York City public shcools for the first time. Proof of a complete physical examination within one year of entering school will satisfy this requirement. For children who cannot obtain examinations elsewhere, and whose parents want the physical examination to be performed by the Department of Health School Health Services, the school nurse will make arrangements for the examination. In addition, each child will be required to be immunized against diphtheria, polio, measles, mumps, and rubella before entering school.

Screening Services

During the school year, children are given vision and hearing tests to identify possible problems. Results of these tests are discussed with parents, who are referred, as needed, to the appropriate health services.

The prekindergarten team observes the children on an ongoing basis, and notes symptoms of illness or fatigue that may prevent a child from fully participating in prekindergarten activities. These symptoms are discussed with the parent, and appropriate recommendations given. Examples might be a toothache, earache, stomach-ache, or listlessness which could require a visit to dentist or doctor; falling asleep in class might indicate that a child needs either an earlier bedtime or rest during the day.

As in the rest of the prekindergarten program, staff and parents work together to determine the services necessary to protect the children's good health.

Preventing Child Abuse

Four-year-olds need warm, trusting relationships with family members, teachers, and other adults. They need to feel good about themselves and their bodies. Unfortunately, this does not always happen. The prekindergarten teacher has the responsibility to observe and take appropriate action for children who appear to be neglected, or who show signs of physical or emotional abuse. Often, the teacher is the only adult, other than members of the immediate family, who sees the child on a regular basis. The following characteristics and patterns may indicate potential harm being done to a child:

- evidence of bruises, wounds, cuts, burns, welts, and scars in various stages of healing indicates abuse over a period of time.
- multiple wounds over more than one side or area of the body.
- cowering or ducking when an adult raises a hand.
- remaining in the background of activities and keeping out of the way.
- engaging in sex play with other children and dolls, or when engaged in dramatic play.
- keeping away from adults in the classroom.
- taking food from other children.
- dressing inappropriately for the weather.
- being consistently late for school.
- delaying in getting ready at dismissal time.
- frequently falling asleep in class.
- showing discomfort when sitting down.
- radical changes in behavior such as withdrawal, hostility or regression.

The teacher should let a child who exhibits these signs of potential abuse know that it's okay to talk privately about what may be going on. The teacher listens patiently and nonjudgmentally to children's attempts to tell about things that may have happened to them with adults. When children reveal that they are being abused, it is vital that the teacher help them realize that it is the abusive adult who is to blame. The child must not be made to feel responsible or guilty. When the teacher is reasonably certain that abuse is taking place, the reporting procedures set up in the school should be followed.

Sharing Responsibility

It is the responsibility of adults to protect the children under their care. The subject of child neglect and abuse might be presented to parents informally, or at group meetings. Films can be shown, followed by discussion and sharing of information and experiences. Experts can be invited to the school to address parents/caregivers about discipline, child care and health, and to distribute related materials.

Children cannot be held responsible for their own self-protection. Even if they have been taught protective behaviors, children are vulnerable to abusive adults. However, given the appalling frequency of child abuse, we must help children help themselves to the extent they are able. Research shows that frequently if the child says "No," this is sufficient to prevent abuse.

The prekindergarten teacher has many opportunities to aid in the prevention of child abuse and neglect. The teacher is in daily contact with parents and can note interactions between the child and family members. The teacher serves as a role model for parents, who can learn about positive methods for handling misbehavior during visits to the classroom. The teacher helps parents set realistic expectations for their children. In the classroom, the teacher approaches the topic of abuse with sensitivity and concern.

Teaching Protective Behaviors

At appropriate times, the teacher talks to individual or small groups of children to develop understandings about feelings related to good and bad touches.

- What do you like to do with your body? (run, jump, dance, walk)
- Do you like to hold hands with some people?
- Do you like to hug some people?
- Do you like some people to hug you?
- Do you like to sit on some people's laps?
- How does it feel? (warm, good, close, happy)

The discussion can be continued now or at another time.

- What are some other times when touching feels good?
- Are there times when touching does not feel good? (hitting, biting, punching, pulling hair, spanking)
- Is touching good if someone hugs you when you don't want to be hugged?
- How does it make you feel? (uncomfortable, angry, scared)
- What can you do about it? (Say, "Don't hug me. I don't want you to.")
- What if you tell someone not to touch you and the person does it anyway? What can you do? (Tell someone who will help you.)

- the doctor listens to your heart and looks in your ears? ("I'm quiet and still; help the doctor dress me.")
- someone holds you too tight? ("I don't like it!")

At other times, the teacher talks about strangers with individual or small groups of children.

- Who are strangers?
- What do you know about strangers?
- Where could you see a stranger?
- What has your family told you about strangers?

As children respond to the questions, rules can be developed:

- Stay with the person taking care of you.
- Never go places alone.
- Never talk to people you do not know well.
- Never go anywhere with a stranger.
- Never take candy, toys, or money from strangers.
- Never take anything from a stranger.

These rules might be shared with parents at group meetings.

At meeting time, the teacher shows a picture of a child who looks sad and alone.

- Where is this child?
- Who is taking care of this child?
- What should the child do?

The teacher and children develop understandings about being lost. They talk about what to do and how to find people who can help a lost child.

- Whom do you ask for help if:
  - you get lost at the swimming pool or beach? (lifeguard)
  - you get lost in a store or restaurant? (a person who works there)
  - you get lost on the sidewalk? (a police officer or a store worker)

The teacher takes cues from the children and plans additional discussions to help youngsters develop understandings about themselves and the adults in their lives.

During interest area times, the teacher helps a few children respond to make-believe situations:

- What happens when:
  - your friend gives you a hug goodbye? ("I smile; like the feeling; hug back.")
  - your brother pulls your hair? ("Don't pull my hair. I don't like it!")
  - your friend takes your hand? ("I hold my friend's hand.")

Section 8

ONGOING ASSESSMENT

RUNN

Recordkeeping

A classroom filled with four-year-olds and the adults who work with them is a busy place, alive with energy, growth and motion. The prekindergarten provides teacher and staff with abundant material for learning as they observe and listen to children playing and interacting with each other. Providing time for the team to confer so they can consolidate and share these observations is an important part of the early childhood program. When such observations are written down, they can be used to assess individual growth, focus on specific strengths and needs, and plan special activities to meet children's emerging interests.

While there are many things to record, the most valuable records are personal and specific. They emerge from the daily life of the classroom. The staff's ability to stand back, observe, and attend is invaluable. The adults note and remember what children choose, what interests them, how they use the materials provided, what they say, how they respond to daily routines, and how they relate to the adults and other children in the room. Every effort is made to describe behavior, rather than to judge it. "Martha threw sand at Juan three times this morning" is descriptive; "Martha is such an angry child" is a judgment.

The teacher unfamiliar with recording might find it helpful at the beginning to concentrate intensively on a single child. Knowing one child well through observation increases knowledge of other children. As children in the class are observed with increasing frequency, more information will become available.

Suggested Methods of Recordkeeping

There are many ways to keep records. Some teachers use charts or notebooks; others jot notes on 3"x5" index cards or checklists. Since each child is unique, each record will be different. Some of the following methods may be useful:

Notebook

Records are kept in a notebook. Each page contains the name of a child in the class and each entry is dated. The teacher writes a line a day about each child. This information serves as a memory jog when notes are reviewed.

BRANSIHA ELLISON

Nov. 2 - Tried a new dessert today. Liked it.

Nov. 3 - Enjoyed blowing bubbles at water table.

Nov. 4 - Did not come to meeting.

Index Cards

These are easy to carry and large enough to write notes or comments on for later reference. Date each entry.

TAMIKA HOLDER

1-16 Tamika asked me to read a story to her for the first time today.

1-17 Tamika listened as I read THE HUNGRY CATERPILLAR. She pointed to familiar foods as I read the words. At the end she exclaimed, "Butterfly!"

Activity Records

This is a method of recording children's choices of interest area activity. Upon review, questions emerge as patterns take shape:

"Are there enough quiet places in the room?"

"Why haven't the children worked in the sand corner this week?"

"Roberto worked in the block corner on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Is he building something special?"

Child______________
Week of____________

Mon.______________
Tues.______________
Wed.______________
Thurs._____________
Fri.______________

Or

Area: Date

Children present:

Comments:

Parent Contacts and Conferences

Records of parent conferences and reports to parents provide additional information for the staff, as well as an ongoing record of home/school relations. Notations of parent visits to the classroom, attendance at meetings and workshops, home visits, telephone calls, and volunteer work in the school or classroom enrich the data. Interviews with parents about children's favorite television programs, toys, foods, and interests supply additional information to be included in class records.

Individual Work Folders

Include samples of children's drawings, paintings, dictated stories, and illustrations. The collection grows as two or three pieces are added each month. Each piece of work is dated and the child's name written on the back. Children may choose which work they wish to save, and parents may provide samples of children's activities from home. Take care not to deface children's works by writing on them.

Tapes

Audio tape recordings of the child in conversation with friends, "reading," or telling a story capture inflection, intonation, and use of language. Videotapes may be useful to share with parents or other members of the team.

Photographs

Pictures provide a visual support to written descriptions. They supply a record of children's work expressed in clay, blocks, or dramatic play. Photographs record activities in which children have participated, such as trips, group music-making, parades, or parties.

Interviews

Interviews with individual children provide quick information, as well as extend observations made by adults in the classroom. Some questions which might be asked include:

- What is your favorite television show?
- Do you have a favorite story? What is it?
- What do you like to do best in school?
- What is your favorite thing to do when you're not in school?
- What makes you happy?
- What makes you sad?

When children are interviewed, it is important to keep the tone conversational. The teacher builds upon this information by planning classroom activities related to children's preferences, and by finding ways of including a child who was not chosen by the other children for a group activity.

Using Records

When recording is regular and consistent, patterns of behavior become apparent. A review of notes will provide information about a child's progress, interests that persist over time, how the child responds to an activity, and whom the child chooses to play with or be near. The staff uses the data collected to:

- measure growth
- note behaviors which recur or change
- plan the responsive curriculum
- personalize the program for children
- prepare for parent conferences
- plan staff reviews

Collecting data is meaningful only when it is shared and utilized. Keeping records which can later be passed on to the kindergarten teacher provides continuity of learning experiences during the primary years.

The Staff Review

Assessment of individual children is scheduled weekly/monthly as part of staff development released time in the prekindergarten program. The staff review allows the prekindergarten team to share perspectives and observations about a particular youngster with others having contact with the child and family. Each review lasts from thirty minutes to an hour. The teacher presents data on the child to the entire group, which later offers related information and responds to questions concerning the child's development. Every effort is made to obtain a picture of the whole child within the school setting. The review results in recommendations geared toward supporting the child's experiences, and attempting to structure the classroom environment to facilitate the child's growth.

The meeting addresses the following characteristics of the child:

- stance in the world and modes of expression:
  gesture, posture, rhythm, language, response to transitions
- physical presence:
  coordination, health, movement, energy
- emotional disposition:
  tone, expressiveness, intensity, range, resilience, resistance, cooperation
- relationships with other children:
  attachments, variation and consistency, quality, range
- relationships with adults:
  attachments, avoidance, needs for nurturing, dependency, trust, independence
- activities and interests:
  manner of engagement, pattern of involvement, intensity
- formal learning and school expectations:
  modes of approach, interests, responses
- strengths and needs:
  areas of independence, areas of frustration

The staff review helps the team develop skills and knowledge about working with each child. It is important to ensure that the privacy of the child and family are safeguarded; the information shared remains confidential. The staff review conludes with the scheduling of a follow-up review and the selection of the child to be considered at the next meeting.

Continuity

When the prekindergarten teacher is sensitive to children's initial stages of development, planning for the next steps will be meaningful and well directed. Many youngsters will have experienced a variety of home and school situations before they are four. Some have participated in social situations with other children at day care centers, private nursery schools, or in locally arranged playgroups. The teacher finds out more about these early experiences with a questionnaire and informal discussion.

Suggested Questionnaire

---

1. Child's name__________________ Date of birth_______________
2. Brothers______________________ Sisters_____________________
3. Routines at home:

   Bedtime________o'clock Wake-up time__________o'clock

   Sleeping problems, if any__________________________________

   ____
4. Favorite foods____
5. Favorite stories____
6. Favorite toys____
7. Type of pet, if any_____________Pet's name_______________
8. Allergies/medical needs, if any____________________________
9. School or playgroup previously attended, if applicable

   ____

   Days per week________________Hours per day________________
   Activities in the program___________________________________

   ____
10. Other information which might help your child at school.

    ____

    ____

Date ____________________ ____________________________
Parent Signature

The prekindergarten teacher collects samples of children's work, observes children at play, and informally records their behaviors. Conferences with parents, the educational assistant, and the family assistant help the teacher plan appropriate activities and experiences to meet each child's needs.

The questionnaire may be filled out during a parents' meeting or at an individual parent-teacher conference. The family assistant can help parents supply this information.

If additional information about a particular child is required, the teacher may meet informally with the parent(s). The teacher who builds a program based on children's prior experiences and strengths ensures the continuity of their development. Information gleaned from the questionnaires can be used to personalize instruction and respond to children's emerging interests:

> "We're going to read The Gingerbread Man today because Jorge's mama told me he really likes that story."
>
> "We're going to look at pictures of fish today. Yvette's father told me about her new fish tank."
>
> "We're having chicken for lunch today. I know that Monique, Tanya, and Romena really like chicken."

Learning is a continuous process within the prekindergarten classroom itself. There is much to learn about at four, and each child arrives with an individual style, background, and agenda. It follows that materials should be open-ended and scheduling flexible. Four-year-olds need freedom to make choices and explore in a variety of situations. For example, a "house" constructed of small boxes expresses the universal motif of "dwelling" or "building." This motif may be repeated in sand, blocks, with paints, or by creating a "house" in the outdoor climber. Four-year-olds do not separate curriculum into discrete disciplines. What began as a cooking experience can spontaneously expand to include a song, or even a parade.

Articulation to Kindergarten

Early childhood teachers recognize that all children have individual timetables for growth and that there is a need for continuity between programs. Chronological age should not be the only indicator of readiness for the next grade. Other considerations are the extent to which a child attends to personal needs, plays with other children comfortably, completes appropriate tasks, and follows verbal directions, as well as use of expressive language.

During the school year, the prekindergarten and kindergarten teachers meet informally to communicate the ongoing expectations of each program. Both teachers develop continuous and related activities, and discuss children whom they know. The insight provided is used to individualize and personalize instruction. Informal records, observation sheets, and samples of children's work are shared so that the kindergarten teacher may plan appropriately, both for those children who need more time and for those who have met and/or exceeded the year's expectations. It is helpful to coordinate staff development activities during the school year, with prekindergarten and kindergarten teachers participating together in preservice and inservice activities whenever possible.

When intervisitation between the two classes is arranged all of the children respond positively. The kindergarten children enjoy visiting their former teacher and demonstrating newly mastered skills. Prekindergarten children develop self-confidence when given a preview of the kindergarten classroom and teacher. Their sense of security is enhanced when the unknown becomes familiar. The prekindergarten children may visit the kindergarten classroom when other children are not present. They will be able to look around the room and become comfortable with the surroundings. In addition, visits between the two groups may be arranged for special occasions.

At the end of the school year, a special meeting may be called to introduce parents to the kindergarten teacher(s) and classroom(s). Visits are scheduled for groups of parents, and an overview of the program is presented by the kindergarten teacher. The prekindergarten teacher discusses individual children with parents, stressing the child's strengths and achievements and indicating those areas which may need attention. Practical suggestions for activities at home which will foster further growth and development are provided.

Developmental Checklist

The following suggested developmental checklist has been adapted from the New York Child Development Scales, New York City Board of Education. The items deal with behaviors that can be observed by the teacher during school hours and which apply specifically to classroom situations. The following areas are addressed: personal and social behavior, physical development, intellectual development, and creative expression. The teacher combines this information with other materials in order to gain knowledge and understanding about each child so that appropriate plans may be implemented.

Child____________________________ Date of Birth_____________________

Prekindergarten Class____

Prekindergarten Teacher____

	Not yet	Some of the time	Most of the time
Personal and Social Behavior			
1. Buttons coat or jacket without assistance			
2. Zips coat or jacket without assistance			
3. Removes and puts on rainboots without assistance (not tied)			
4. Fastens own shoes (not tied)			
5. Knows full name			
6. Knows home address			
7. Replaces toys and materials			
8. Evaluates own behavior			
9. Makes friends with other children			
10. Shows reasonable self control			
11. Follows class rules			
12. Accepts changes in routines			

	Not yet	Some of the time	Most of the time
13. Shares with other children			
14. Knows and uses names of adults in classroom			
15. Tries new things			
16. Is able to take turns			
Physical Development			
17. Uses large muscles to:			
hop			
jump			
run			
gallop			
throw a ball			
18. Uses small muscles to:			
cut with scissors			
paste			
draw with crayons			
manipulate toys			
play with puzzles			
work with clay			
19. Walks up and down steps using two feet alternately			
20. Climbs, slides, swings on outdoor equipment			
21. Is able to place pegs in holes			
22. Strings one-inch beads			
23. Erects simple block structures			
Intellectual development			
24. Expresses curiosity			
25. Recalls a sequence of events			
26. Recognizes likenesses and differences in a variety of materials			

	Not yet	Some of the time	Most of the time
27. Understands basic concepts: up/down sweet/sour more/less big/little under/over soft/hard			
28. Counts from one to five			
29. Participates in dramatic play			
30. Speaks in an understandable manner			
31. Relates incidents in simple language			
32. Uses sentences averaging five or six words			
33. Makes up nonsense words or rhymes			
34. Talks freely to other children			
35. Talks freely to adults in room			
36. Identifies common objects			
37. Retells a story			
38. Shows an interest in books and stories			
39. Recites simple poems and finger plays			
40. Memorizes and sings simple songs			
41. Participates in group discussions and meetings			
Creative Expression			
42. Sings songs			
43. Experiments with paints			
44. Dramatizes simple stories and poems			
45. Explores the sounds of rhythm instruments			

	Not yet	Some of the time	Most of the time
46. Responds to music through movement			
47. Models with clay			
48. Uses a variety of tools in drawing			

Section 9

SCOPE OF CURRICULUM AREAS

SCOPE OF THE CURRICULUM AREAS

ART

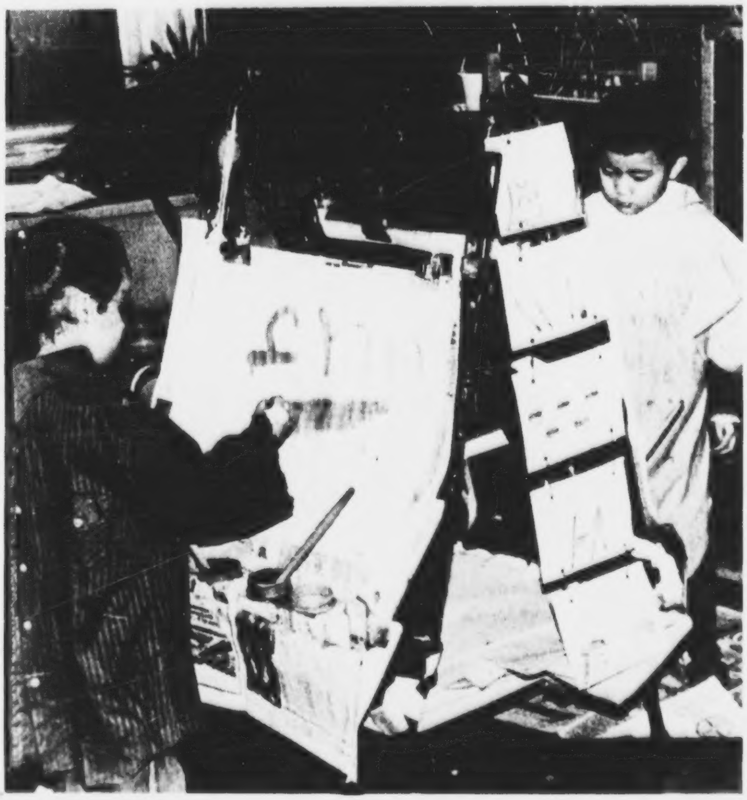
For four-year-olds, the process of creating with art media and materials is much more important than creating finished products. Engaging in creative art is valuable for young children's personal development; it is therefore important to provide a classroom environment that facilitates and encourages participation. It is equally important to give every child plenty of time for individual exploration of art processes. The child begins to develop understandings of the elements of art.

Scope of the Program

Content	Skills and Understandings
Random marks and controlled sribbles; beginning to understand symbols as representations of ideas and feelings	. improves visual discrimination.
	. begins to understand that the hand can control the drawing tool.
	. begins to develop eye-hand coordination.
	. becomes excited at discovery of new forms created.
	. draws images which are not preconceived and which may be influenced by first forms made.
	. begins to draw representations of humans.
	. begins to talk about symbols created (these may not be recognizable to the adult).
	. usually draws things as "known" rather than as "seen."

CONTENT	SKILLS ADD UNDERSTANDINGS
Exploratory manipulation of the medium with brushes; lines, forms, colors on top of one another; beginning to use symbols to express ideas and feelings	. begins to develop control of running paint. . symbols emerge later than in drawing. . begins to talk about quality of paint, colors, discovered mixtures. . images are spontaneous rather than planned. . begins to make first symbols in outline.
Exploration of the medium by manipulation (squeezing, rolling, pounding)	. begins to develop more refined small motor control. . begins to try different methods of manipulating. . begins to model flat people with feet coming out of the head, snake-like forms, and amorphous forms which may be named (these are frequently food items like cookies or hot dogs). . may begin to use coils to outline forms. . begins to probe clay mass with fingers and/or sticks. . begins to converse with classmates while using clay.
Exploring lines and forms on a slick surface, using fingers and all parts of the hand; creating monoprints from fingerpainted designs	. may begin to enjoy sensory stimulation . begins to move paint around on a slick surface, creating scribble-like lines and forms. . begins to create named symbols, using one finger as a drawing tool. . may begin to press a clean paper over a fingerpainted surface, and helps to "pull a print."
Collage and assemblage	. tears paper into small pieces. . begins to cut out random shapes. . begins to use paste or glue to attach paper to other paper (next to or on top of) starts by putting the paste on the base paper.

CONTENT	SKILLS AND UNDERSTANDINGS
	. begins to arrange and paste pre-cut or torn papers into simple representational symbols (usually a person or house). . begins to choose from a variety of "found" materials to combine with paper for collage (including items from nature like leaves). . may add crayoned lines to pasted paper.
Assemblage and construction; cardboard boxes, wood scraps, and other materials are arranged through handling and exploring	. explores arrangements in space and begins to glue together small cardboard boxes and/or small scraps of wood. . begins to decorate constructions with crayon, paint, markers, bits of colored paper, and/or pieces of yarn and materials from nature, e.g., leaves, feathers.
Printmaking	. begins to apply paint to sponges and other "found" items and make prints of the items on paper or cardboard.



COMMUNICATION ARTS

The developmental process of acquiring skills is dependent upon the children's maturational levels, as well as their learning styles and individual rates of growth. Language development is extended and expanded through such experiences such as:

- listening to stories and poems
- listening to adults and other children
- engaging in informal conversations and discussions
- painting
- drawing
- contributing to experience charts

Here are two statements from kindergarten children that demonstrate the need to observe and monitor children's development as they begin to use the tools of reading and writing in school.

> "Don't pay attention to the black marks on the bottom of the page. They are for people who don't know how to read pictures."
>
> "I used to write when I was little. Now in school I only make A's and B's."

Children acquire communication skills developmentally as they explore, manipulate, discuss, listen, and think. Children learn through varied and repeated experiences, using concrete materials and real situations. Through making sense of their world, they listen, speak, write, and read as they become involved in planned and unplanned activities in the classroom.

Communication Arts Scope & Skills

BEGINNING READING

Auditory Skills (Perception, Discrimination, Memory)
Beginning to:

- Identify common sounds in the environment
- Distinguish between sounds
- Recall a sound or sequence of sounds
- Distinguish among words in classroom routines

Auditory Comprehension

Beginning to:
- Follow simple oral directions
- Recall two sequentially related directions
- Understand story content:
  - recall details
  - understand cause and effect
  - predict outcomes
- Understand spoken information
- Listen with interest

Oral Communication

Beginning to:
- Converse informally with children and adults
- Ask questions
- Express opinions
- Learn and use new spoken vocabulary
- Discuss feelings
- Repeat finger plays, poems, songs
- Communicate using sentences/express complete thoughts
- Exchange ideas
- Share stories, songs, poems
- Learn and use new words

Fine Motor Skills

Beginning to:
- Put together simple puzzles
- Fingerpaint
- String beads
- Use clay
- Paste pictures/shapes to background sheet
- Pour liquids, e.g., juice, paint
- Hold and use crayons
- Use wide paint brushes
- Use scissors
- Tear paper

Interest in/Attitudes Toward Reading

Beginning to:
- Look at books
- Interpret pictures
- Describe objects, people, situations
- Classify information
- Make associations
- Retell experiences
- Participate in meaningful dialogues
- Recall sequence
- Identify parts of a book, e.g., cover, title, front, back
- Look at books from front to back
- Handle books with care

- Hold book right side up, cover front
- Turn pages correctly
- Appreciate good literature and poetry
- React to visual stimuli
- Have favorite stories

Visual Skills (Perception, Discrimination, Memory)

Beginning to:

- Recognize size relationships
- Identify/distinguish colors (red, blue, yellow, green, purple, black, brown, orange, white)
- Identify/compare shapes (circle, square, triangle)
- Match objects
- Match shapes/forms
- Match pictures
- Locate picture on a page
- Notice details in pictures
- Continue a simple pattern
- Recall a missing object in a group
- Identify letters
- Classify objects that are similar and different

Beginning Writing

Beginning to:

- Associate oral language with print
- Draw with pencils and markers
- Write, using pictures, symbols, letters
- Write first name

Sight Word/Vocabulary Development

Beginning to be:

- Aware of print in environment
  - use name labels
  - use information charts (rebus)
  - contribute to experience charts

Reading Vocabulary

Beginning to identify sight words in the environment, e.g., "stop," "walk," "exit," "school," numerals, experience charts, book titles, functional labels

Phonetic Analysis

Beginning to:

- Recognize letter sounds
- Use rhyming words in songs and poems
- Become aware of letter sounds

HEALTH EDUCATION

Promoting good health is one of the major objectives of education and is essential to the achievement of all other objectives. Health education supplements and reinforces efforts at home and in the community. School health personnel and teachers work closely with parents in understanding the significance of health problems and education for health, as well as helping them find and utilize available community resources.

Health education permeates the prekindergarten classroom. While the content areas are separated below, the material presented to four-year-olds is integrated into the ongoing experiences of the class. For example, the understanding that raw fruit should be washed before eating might be incorporated into a salad preparation lesson.

Content	Understandings
Cleanliness and Health Protection	The child begins to understand that: . Doctors and nurses help keep us well by giving examinations and immunizations. . Symptoms of illness should be reported to one's parent or teacher immediately. . Raw fruits and vegetables should be washed before eating. . Hands should be washed before eating and cooking, and after toileting. . It is important to take a bath or shower every day.
Nutrition	The child begins to understand that: . It is important to try different kinds of food. . There are many foods that help keep the body healthy and energized.

Dental Health

The child begins to understand that:

- Dentists help us take care of our teeth.
- Whenever possible, teeth should be brushed after eating. There is a proper way to brush teeth.

Mental Health

The child begins to understand that:

- Each and every person is important.
- People are alike, yet everyone is an individual.
- People have different talents and abilities.
- Curiosity about others is good.

Eyes and Their Care

The child begins to understand that:

- People wear glasses to see better.
- Eyes are sensitive to touch and must be protected.

Safety and First Aid

The child begins to understand that:

- All accidents should be promptly reported to an adult.
- Procedures for fire drills are important and must be obeyed.
- Sharp instruments like pencils and scissors should be carried carefully, point down and enclosed in fist, to prevent accidents.
- It is important to obey traffic signals. The police officer or school crossing guard directs traffic to help children cross the street safely.

Exercise, Rest, and Sleep

The child begins to understand that:

- Rest helps the body build new energy.
- Getting enough sleep is important.
- Exercise helps the body to grow strong.

MATHEMATICS

Mathematics in prekindergarten encompasses all of the following major strands:

Number concepts
Operations with whole numbers
Operations with fractions
Probability
Geometry and measurement
Problem solving

The curriculum is developmental, as is the child's individual growth. Teachers should use their own judgment concerning the initiation of these topics. Opportunities for introducing an awareness of the concepts will come from various activities using concrete materials, such as sand, water, and blocks.

> Awareness and a beginning level of understanding mathematical concepts is the goal of the prekindergarten mathematics program. Many of the concepts, while introduced in prekindergarten, may not be internalized until later.

Manipulative materials are to be explored throughout the year, allowing time for: children to discover the properties of each type of material; the teacher to observe children's levels of skill development in using each material.

Concepts to be introduced include:

- Spatial relationships
- Attributes of shapes
- Sets
- Time concepts
- Size concepts
- Numerals
- Conservation of numbers
- Comparisons
- Money
- Temperature
- Problem solving
- Number relationships
- Graphing
- Sequence
- Fractions
- Capacity
- One-to-one correspondence
- Number names
- Sharing whole objects
- Addition with real objects
- Weight
- Nonstandard measurement

The level of a child's skill development and the mastery of language (terminology) may not be the same. Both types of learning should be continually assessed. As the teacher guides the children, terminology is continually taught through modeling and dialogue.

Children should move developmentally, building upon the skills and knowledge of yesterday's learnings, integrating today's experiences, and going forward to meet tomorrow's challenges.

Numbers Around Us

- Becoming aware of personal data:
  - age
  - birthday
  - address
  - telephone number

- Becoming aware of number names in the environment:
  - home: numerals on the clock, TV channel selector, mail box
  - classroom: hook numbers in the classroom closet, class calendar, room number
  - school: room numbers in the hall, numerals on the school buses, seat numbers in the auditorium, numbers in the lunchroom
  - neighborhood: numbers on street signs, on buses, address numbers on doorways, numerals on subway trains

Spatial Relationships

Beginning to distinguish between:
- in front of/in back of
- up/down
- above/below
- on/off

Spatial Relationships: Extended Vocabulary

Beginning to distinguish between:
- top/bottom
- before/after
- inside/outside
- in/out

Shapes Around Us

Beginning to:
- Recognize a circle
- Recognize a square
- Recognize a rectangle
- Recognize a triangle
- Be aware of patterns

Parts of Three-Dimensional Shapes

Beginning to:
- Identify three-dimensional shapes; e.g., ball, box
- Recognize edges, corners of a three-dimensional shape

Problem Solving: Language

Beginning to:
- Locate and describe objects in the classroom
- Locate and describe objects within a picture
- Make inferences based on information obtained from a picture

Problem Solving: One-to-One Correspondence

Beginning to:
- Match numbers to pictures/objects
- Solve simple problems using one-to-one correspondence

Comparison of Sets

Beginning to:
- Distinguish between all and none
- Compare sets by matching which has more when given two (2) sets of objects
- Compare sets by matching which has fewer when given two (2) sets of objects
- Compare sets by matching which set has more or fewer

Conservation of the Number in a Set up to Four (4) Objects

Beginning to:
- Name sets of objects
- Name the number in a set of objects
- Understand that counting objects in different positions does not change the number

Numerals One (1) Through Four (4)

Beginning to:
- Associate the numerals 1 through 4 with a set having one through four objects
- Recognize the symbols 1 through 4 as numerals for the numbers one through four
- Identify the number of elements in given groups (1 through 4)

Numerals Five Through 10

Numeral Ten (10)

Beginning to:
- Recite the numerals 1 through 10 in correct counting order

Addition

Beginning to:
- Recognize that addition can be completed by a union of sets
- Recognize that when two (non-empty) sets (groups) of objects are put together, the resulting set has more objects than either of the two (2) original sets

Add One

Beginning to:
- Add 1 object to 1 object
- Add 1 object to 2 objects
- Add 1 object to 3 objects
- Add 1 object to 4 objects
- Add 1 object to 5 through 10 objects

Ordinal Numbers First Through Fourth

Beginning to:
- Identify the ordinal position of each object in a row through four objects
- Match the ordinal numbers first through fourth to the cardinal numbers (numerals) one to four

Subtraction

Beginning to:
- Recognize that when a member is subtracted from a set, the resulting set is smaller than the original group
- Become aware of story problems related to skills learned in this module

Classification by Attributes

Beginning to:
- Order sets of objects from smallest to largest
- Order sets of objects from largest to smallest
- Distinguish likenesses and differences
- Distinguish between same and different
- Identify attributes of shape, color, size
- Order sets of objects according to similar attributes which the child determines

Size Concepts

Beginning to distinguish among;
- Degrees of sizes - large/larger
- Degrees of sizes - small/smaller
- Concepts of long/longer
- Concepts of short/shorter

Sequence

Beginning to:
- Pick the object that goes before a given object
- Pick the object that comes after a given object

Share Objects

Beginning to:
- Recognize that when a group is separated into two parts, each is part of the whole group
- Solve oral word problems related to the use of sharing

A Whole Unit

Beginning to:
- Identify an object as a unit
- Identify a part of a whole

Fraction - One Half (1/2)

Beginning to:
- Recognize equal parts of a whole
- Recognize that when an object is separated into two (2) equal pieces, each piece is one-half (1/2) that of the whole object
- Divide objects into halves

Comparison of a Half Unit to a Whole Unit

Beginning to:

- Recognize that a whole object is greater than part of the object
- Recognize that part of an object is less than a whole

Nonstandard Measurement

Beginning to:

- Measure the length and/or height of objects using nonstandard units of measure
- Measure the capacity of objects using nonstandard units of measure
- Define and compare nonstandard measurements in weight: heavy/heavier
- Define and compare nonstandard measurements in weight: light/lighter

Instruments of Measurement

Beginning to:

- Recognize that a ruler is an instrument used to measure length
  - What do we use to measure length?
- Recognize that a scale is an instrument used to measure weight (heavy/light)
  - What do we use to tell how heavy something is?
- Recognize that a thermometer is an instrument used to measure temperature (hot/cold)
  - Is today warmer than yesterday?
  - What do we use to tell how hot or cold it is?

General Temperature-Measurement Terms

Beginning to:

- Distinguish between the concepts of hot and cold
- Distinguish between cooler than/hotter than

Time of Day/Age Relationships

Beginning to:

- Recognize times of the day - morning, noon, afternoon, and night
- Distinguish between before/after
- Distinguish between day/night
- Distinguish between older/younger

Money: Pennies

Beginning to:

- Recognize and identify the penny
- Count pennies

Coins: Nickel and Dime

Beginning to:

- Recognize and name a nickel
- Recognize and name a dime
- Discriminate between penny, nickel, and dime

Weight

Beginning to:

- Distinguish between the concepts of heavy and light
- Compare objects that weigh more than, less than, and the same as

Capacity of Containers

Beginning to:

- Identify containers that are full/empty, part full/part empty
- Distinguish between more than, less than, and the same as

Number Relationships

Beginning to:

- Construct a graph using blocks, cubes

MUSIC/MOVEMENT

Music/movement skills include many interrelated activities which expand children's natural mode of expression. When integrated into the curriculum, music supports growth and learning in all areas, while encouraging creativity and enhancing socialization.

Content	Skills and Understandings
Singing: nursery rhymes; familiar songs, jingles, chants; original melodies	. begins to understand concepts, such as one-to-one correspondence, counting forwards and backwards, and sequencing.
	. experiences cooperation and sharing as part of a group.
	. learns about animals, nature, people, and feelings.
	. develops ability to keep the beat.
Moving to: songs, recorded rhythms, game directions, instrumental beat	. creates rhythmic interpretations.
	. develops increased coordination.
	. uses skills in an integrated manner; thinks about, plans, and carries out movements.
Producing Sound: with voice, body parts, objects in the environment, instruments	. explores and controls sound sources.
	. explores ways of producing sounds by clapping, tapping, rubbing, shaking, blowing, plucking.
	. begins to arrange sounds in patterns.
	. creates simple instruments with found materials.

- plays simple percussion instruments to accompany the singing and rhythmic movement of others.
- learns to change the dynamics of music from loud to soft, soft to loud.
- becomes more competent in controlling tempo, and is able to change from slow to fast, fast to slow.

Creating:
songs, chants

- often sings or chants spontaneously to accompany classroom activities.
- adds a new verse to a familiar song or creates new words for a familiar melody.

Listening to:
recordings,
instruments,
sounds in the
environment

- discriminates between: different sounds around us; people's voices.
- learns that people speak different languages and that instruments make different sounds.
- listens to familiar recorded selections and uses instruments to accompany the music.
- listens to recorded selections of classical, folk, ethnic, and contemporary music.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Four-year-olds revel in their newly developing motor skills. They move for the pleasure of the movement itself - not just to "get somewhere." They exaggerate everything they do. If they can walk, they gallop; if they can climb, they climb higher; if they can tell a story, they will shout it. Their energy often seems boundless; their recently acquired confidence seems ready to accept all challenges. Four-year-olds have an inner drive to move which needs to be nurtured - never stifled.

The prekindergarten physical education program provides many experiences that are meaningful for young children's overall development. The teacher arranges the classroom to allow adequate space for freedom of movement and plans time for indoor and outdoor activities. Children begin to increase coordination and balance, refine small and large motor skills, and become more confident in their physical capabilities. Learning is integrated and joyful, spontaneous and structured, as children manipulate materials, participate in games, and respond to music with creative movement. These activities give children opportunities to learn important social skills as they become aware of their bodies in relation to space. Prekindergarten experiences which offer a balance of rest and active play can make a vital contribution to a child's learning and development, and are the building blocks for a relevant program in early childhood education.

Content	Skills and Understandings
The Body and Its Parts	The child begins to: . locate parts of the body (head, shoulders, arms, hands, legs, knees, feet). . move body parts independent of each other (claps or shakes hands, nods head, squats and bends knees).
Where the Body Moves	The child begins to: . understand the difference between personal and general space. . respond to verbal directions about space (up, down, forward, back). . become aware of pathways and formations - walks in a relatively straight line; joins a group who arrange themselves in a circle or square.
How the Body Moves	The child begins to: . understand and control the speed of movements.
What the Body Can Do	The child begins to: . recognize verbal descriptions of movement (stretch, bend, push, pull, hop, jump, gallop, walk, run). . gain motor mastery of these movements. . roll, bounce, and occasionally catch a large ball. . pass, push, or carry a bean bag, ring or hollow block.

SCIENCE

The prekindergarten science curriculum is a hands-on experimental approach which meets the developing needs of the four-year-old child. The free use of materials and equipment in the daily schedule affords many good opportunities for experiences in science. The children are participants in their own learning; motivation comes from the child's interest in the material. Raw materials such as sand and water give the child many possibilities for action. They can be used in a variety of ways, and give children opportunities to explore and experiment. When the child feels comfortable and competent with the material, learning will take place.

As children solve problems, they make decisions about the world around them. They evaluate their own results and test their ideas. A sense of mastery over the environment is encouraged by allowing children to respond to materials at their own level. Science becomes an enjoyable, integrated part of the prekindergarten.

Content	Skills and Understandings
Introduction to Measurement	Child begins to: . match two objects that are the same (fall leaves, shells, toys). . understand that objects have size; objects can be measured. . match pairs of objects that are equal in length. . find pairs of objects (or people) that are equal (or nearly equal) in height. . pair plane figures with the same shape having similar areas. . observe that some objects may float in water, others may sink. . observe and describe objects according to relative size (smaller, taller, bigger). . develop awareness of the principles of balances to determine relative weights of objects. . understand that containers have various shapes, sizes, and capacities. . measure and compare capacities of containers.
Living Things Around Us	
From Seed to Plant	Child begins to: . understand that seeds have certain needs in order to live and grow. . observe plants and describe their physical characteristics (leaves, stems, flowers, buds, roots). . identify and describe the changes that occur as seeds germinate; record their growth. . understand that certain amounts of light, water, and warmth are needed for plants to grow and thrive. . observe specific changes that occur during the four seasons (trees, animals, water, weather, humans, flowers). . collect and name pictures of a variety of common objects (pets, flowers, foods, animals).
Animals	Child begins to: . observe animals and describe their physical characteristics (covering, movement, body shape, sounds). . understand that animals have special needs. . listen to specific animal sounds and identify the animal.

- understand that people and animals change in size and in many other ways as they grow older.
- identify the major parts of animals' bodies and the human body; become aware of self.
- observe and match offspring with correct adult.
- observe pets in school and at home (movement, food, schedule).
- understand that parts of animals help them to move (wings, feet, fins).
- collect and name pictures of a variety of common animals.
- provide care for a classroom pet, and make observations of the results.
- describe a specific change that occurs in animals during the four seasons.
- observe when a pet is excited, frightened, or injured.
- play with a pet safely.

Environment

Child begins to:

- identify plants and animals commonly found in a backyard/park.
- observe and describe plants and animals that are commonly found around the school.
- understand that plants and animals are dependent on other plants and animals.

Things Around Us

Using Our Senses

Child begins to:

- understand that objects have different properties.
- observe and name red, yellow, blue, (primary colors) orange, green, purple, (secondary colors), plus white, brown, and black.
- compare and describe a square, circle, triangle, and rectangle according to shape.
- Observe and describe the texture of common objects (rough, smooth, fuzzy).
- describe common sounds (loud, soft, high, low, animal, household, people).
- compare and describe common scents (pleasant, unpleasant, strong, mild).
- describe common flavors according to taste (sweet, sour, salty, bitter).
- explore ways in which sound can be produced.

Properties

Child begins to:

- understand that objects have unique properties that distinguish them from one another.
- understand that different materials have different properties (color, shape, texture).
- sort and group a variety of objects according to color.
- sort and group a variety of common objects according to odor (sweet, bitter, strong).
- describe shadow shapes created by common objects.
- sort and group a variety of objects according to size (buttons, shoes, toys).
- understand that objects have distinctive shapes.
- sort and group a variety of objects according to shape (triangle, circle, square).
- sort and group a set of objects according to one property of the child's choice (color, shape, size).
- sort and group a set of objects according to one property of the teacher's choice.
- describe the properties of an "unknown" object.
- organize objects in the classroom by use in specific learning centers.

Change

Child begins to:

- sort objects made from the same substance (wood, plastic, rubber).
- identify the sequence of common events (morning, noon, night; seed, seedling, mature plant).
- understand that seedlings grow into mature plants over time.
- describe likely weather conditions for each season of the year.
- understand that the properties of an object can be changed (cooking, freezing, mixing, hammering, dropping).
- describe changes that occur when common objects are exposed to various temperatures (butter, popcorn, ice).
- describe the type of clothing to wear in given specific weather conditions.
- describe changes that occur with the seasons (trees, animals, water, weather).
- describe changes in weather conditions from day to day.
- understand that an event takes time to occur (melting, freezing, cooking).
- observe and describe changes which may occur in properties of an object (melting, color, size).
- describe the changes that occur as seeds germinate.

Collections

Child begins to:

- collect and name a variety of common objects (leaves, shells, coins, toys).
- select an appropriate name for a collection of objects with a common characteristic (leaves, dolls, animals, rocks).
- select objects to create a collection whose members have one common property. (objects to write with, objects to drink from, soft objects).
- Match a collection of silhouettes of classroom objects to the object which produced the shadow.
- Understand that there are many ways to organized a collection of objects based on the properties of an object.

SOCIAL STUDIES

The social studies program in the prekindergarten focuses on three important aspects of the four-year-old child: the awareness of self as an individual; social relationships; group membership.

The emphasis on self-identity assists the child to differentiate the self from others in terms of both unique and shared personal qualities. Value is placed on promoting confidence in the child - by acknowledging strengths, by recognizing and responding to interests, and by respecting individual preferences and choices.

Because children's relationships influence their social growth, developmentally appropriate skills of social living and interaction are introduced and consistently reinforced. Throughout the course of the prekindergarten program, the children are encouraged to become aware of other people and their rights, and to cooperate with rules and routines designed to enhance the school experience for all participants.

With the child's strengthening sense of self and the accumulation of positive social experiences, social studies content is chosen relevant to those groups in which the child holds membership. Activities are planned to explore the prekindergarten, the family, the neighborhood, and to recognize those events of the city, state, nation, and world that impact upon the child's life in special days, celebrations, and symbols.

The prekindergarten social studies curriculum can provide a base for four-year-olds to begin developing New York State's Social Studies Program understandings, as follows:

Content Area Perspective	Understandings
Social	Begins to understand that: . Each person has needs, wants, and abilities. . Each person is unique and important. . Most people live in families though families differ.
Political	Begins to understand that: . All children and adults have responsibilities. . Rules affect children and adults. . People make and change rules for many reasons.

Content Area Perspective	Understandings
	. People make rules which involve consideration of others. . People make decisions which involve others. . Each person can be a contributor to decision making and problem solving. . Holidays are celebrations of special times.
Economic	Begins to understand that: . Families have needs and wants. . Communities provide facilities and services to help satisfy the needs and wants of members. . People rely on each other for goods and services. . People make decisions about the money they earn.
Geographic	Begins to understand that: . Directions are used for relation and location.
Historic	Begins to understand that: . All people change through their lives. . Places and things change over time. . Places and things sometimes remain the same. . People celebrate important dates and events. . People may follow traditions and customs that are different from one another.

Section 10

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BIBLIOGRAPHY AND RESOURCES

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- Art
- Bilingual Education
- Block Building
- Cooking
- Communication Arts
- Mathematics
- Multicultural
- Music
- Nonsexist
- Nutrition
- Outdoor Activities
- Play
- Science
- Trips
- Woodworking

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C.E.C./E.R.I.C. Clearinghouse on Handicapped and Gifted Children
The Council for Exceptional Children
1920 Association Drive
Reston, VA 22091

Early Childhood Resource and Information Center
The New York Public Library
66 Leroy Street
New York, NY 10014

E.R.I.C. Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education
College of Education, University of Illinois
805 W. Pennsylvania Avenue
Urbana, IL 61801

New York City Board of Education
Division of Curriculum and Instruction
Early Childhood Education Unit
131 Livingston Street
Brooklyn, NY 11201

JOURNALS

The following journals are important resources which you may wish to investigate.

Child Care Employees News. Child Care Employee Project, P.O. Box 5603, Berkeley, CA 94705.

Child Care Information Exchange. C-44, Redmond, WA 98052.

Childhood Education. Association for Childhood Education International, 3615 Wisconsin Avenue N.W., Washington, D.C. 20016.

Daycare and Early Education. Human Sciences Press, 72 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10011.

Voice for Children. 1012 14th Street N.W., Washington, D.C. 20005.

Young Children. National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1834 Connecticut Avenue N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009.

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

The following are organizations concerned with young children and teachers of young children with which you may wish to become involved.

National Association for the Education of Young Children (N.A.E.Y.C.)
1834 Connecticut Avenue N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20009

Association For Childhood Education International (A.C.E.I.)
3615 Wisconsin Avenue N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20016

Children's Defense Fund
1520 New Hampshire Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20002

Organisation mondiale pour l'education préscolaire (OMEP), and the U.S. National Committee for Early Childhood Education
81 Irving Place
New York, NY 10003

The Day Care and Child Development Council of America
1012 14th Street N.W.,
Washington, D.C. 20005

Early Childhood Education Council of New York City
66 Leroy Street
New York, NY 10014

RECOMMENDED BOOKS FOR CHILDREN

Alexander, Martha. Nobody Asked Me If I Wanted a Baby Sister. New York: Dial, 1971.

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Aliki. Corn Is Maize. New York: T.Y. Crowell, 1976.

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Aruego, Jose. Look What I Can Do. New York: Scribner, 1971.

Ayer, Jacqueline. Nu Dang and His Kite. New York: Harcourt, 1959.

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Bourne, Miriam Anne. Raccoons Are for Loving. New York: Random House, 1968.

Brown, Margaret Wise. The Runaway Bunny. New York: Harper & Row, 1972.

Bruna, Dick. I Can Count. New York: Methuen, 1968.

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Burningham, John. Just Cats: Six Learning Groups. New York: Viking Kestrel, 1983.

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Caines, Jeanette Franklin. Abby. New York: Harper & Row, 1973.

Carle, Eric. The Very Hungry Caterpillar. New York: Philomel, 1979.

Charlip, Remy, and Lillian Moore. Hooray for Me. New York: Four Winds Press, 1975.

Clifton, Lucille. Amifka. New York: Dutton, 1977.

Cohen, Miriam. Will I Have a Friend? New York: Macmillan, 1976.

Crews, Donald. Freight Train. New York: Greenwillow, 1978.

DePaola, Tomie. Watch Out for the Chicken Feet in Your Soup. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1974.

Eastman, P. D. Are You My Mother? New York: Random, 1960.

Ets, Marie Hall. Gilberto and the Wind. New York: Viking Press, 1963.

Feelings, Muriel. Moja Means One. New York: Dial, 1972.

Freeman, Don. Corduroy. New York: Viking Press, 1965.

Freeman, Lory. It's My Body. Parenting Press Inc.

Hoban, Russell. Bedtime for Frances. New York: Harper & Row, 1960.

Hoban, Tana. Over, Under and Through. New York: Macmillan, 1973.

__________. Round & Round & Round. New York: Greenwillow, 1983.

Hoberman, Mary Ann. A House Is a House for Me. New York: Viking Kestrel, 1978.

Hogrogian, Nonny. One Fine Day. New York: Macmillan, 1971.

Keats, Ezra Jack. Apt. 3. New York: Macmillan, 1971.

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Kesselman, Wendy. Emma. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1980.

Kraus, Robert. Whose Mouse Are You? New York: Macmillan, 1970.

Lexau, Joan M. Benjie. New York: Dial, 1964.

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Lobel, Anita. The Rose in My Garden. New York: Greenwillow, 1984.

Lobel, Arnold and Anita. On Market Street. New York: Greenwillow, 1981.

Maestro, Betsy and Giulio. The Guessing Game. New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1983.

Maiorano, Robert. Francisco. New York: Macmillan, 1978.

Marshall, James. George and Martha. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1972.

Martin, Bill Jr. Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See? New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1983.

McCloskey, Robert. Make Way for Ducklings. New York: Viking Press, 1969.

Milne, A. A. Pooh's Counting Book. New York: Dutton, 1983.

Mosel, Arlene. Tikki Tikki Tembo. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1968.

Provensen, Alice and Martin. Seasons. New York: Random House, 1976.

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Sendak, Maurice. Where the Wild Things Are. New York: Harper & Row, 1963.

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Steig, William. Sylvester and the Magic Pebble. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1969.

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Aruego, J. Look What I Can Do. New York: Scribners, 1971.

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Baum, W. Birds of a Feather. Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1969.

Briggs, Raymond. The Snowman. New York: Random House, 1978.

Carl, E. Do You Want to be My Friend? New York: T. Y. Crowell, 1971.

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Embirley, Ed. A Birthday Wish. Boston: Little, Brown, 1977.

Goodall, John S. The Adventures of Paddy Pork. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1968.

Hoban, Tana. Look Again! New York: Macmillan, 1971.

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Schick, E. Making Friends. New York: Macmillan, 1969.

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Williams, Margery. The Velveteen Rabbit. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1926.

Evaluation Form

Three, Four, Open the Door

Division of Curriculum and Instruction
Office of Curriculum Development and Support
Early Childhood Education Unit

Please return by March 1, 1987, to:

Marjorie McAllister, Director
Early Childhood Education Unit
131 Livingston Street
Brooklyn, New York 11201

Name: ______________________ School: ______________________

Title or Position: ______________________________________

1. Was First Days helpful to you in starting out the school year? What additional information might have been included?

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____

2. Did Creating a Learning Environment help you to organize your classroom? Please mention specific ideas which were helpful.

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____
____

3. Which parts of The Interactive Teacher did you find useful?

____
____
____

4. Which of the suggestions in Working Together were most helpful? Would you like this section expanded?

____
____
____

5. Did *The Emerging Curriculum* assist you in implementing your program? If so, how?

6. Have you developed some of the suggested *Interest Areas* in your classroom? Which additional interest areas did you develop?

7. Did you find *Parent Involvement* a useful section? Would you like this section expanded? If so, in what way?

8. Have you used either of the suggested *Checklists*? If not, have you used another checklist? Would you like to see it included in the guide?

9. Did *Scope of Curriculum Areas* aid you in planning and implementing your program? If so, how?

10. What additions, deletions, and/or revisions would you like to see in a new edition?

11. What is your overall reaction to the guide?

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